THE

HISTORY

Of the Seven wiſe Maſters of Rome.

Now newly Corrected, better explained in many places, and Enlarged with many pretty Pictures lively expreſſing the full HISTORY.

LONDON

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To the Reader.

READER: for thy better delight, and more plainly to set forth this History to thy view, I have to my great cost, added many Pictures lively expressing to most materiall points contained in every Example: for which pains of mine. If I may receive thy thanks, I think it a sufficient reward. The History *of it self is both ancient and moral, and containeth in it much of that learning; When Ignorance having a thick and dull eare, men were compelled to draw the rude multitude to attention of good instruction, by such pleasing allurements of Tales and Fables, as in this book is set down: that as the mind is fed and delighted with the sweetness and fabulous* Story. *the Soul it self at the end (by often tasting the same nourishment) grow, quicker-sighted to behold the hidden and mystical wisdom contained under such close Riddles. For in few words to give you the meaning of this* Morall, *it is thus: The Emperour may signify the* World, *who having but one only Sonne (who is* Man, *him to bring up well is all his care. But* Man *loosing his own Mother (who is* Reason *or divine* Grace) *and falling into the hands of his*

Step-mother, signifying Sin) *who is an Empress of great bewitching, and one that Commands the* World, *she works by all means possible the utter confusion of* Man.

And would prevaile against his weakness, but that a Star from Heaven (by which is meant goodness from above) instructs Man *how to avoid the allurements of Sin, by not opening his mouth to bid her welcome. And the better to prevent her mischief he hath* Seven wise Masters, *which are seven liberal Sciences, to give him wholesome instructions, and by these helpes save him from mortall danger. So that being thus arm'd Man liveth to batter down sin (figured in the death of the Empress and her Minions) And in the end, to gaine a rich Crown of glory and happiness set ready for all those that in this life labour to attaine to Heaven by doing well.*

This is the explanation of this Morall; of which if thou makest right use, it will be as a rich banquent to thy soule. Farewell.

Here beginneth the Hiſtory of the Seven Wiſe Maſters of ROME,

Containing many pleaſant and witty narrations, very delightful to the Reader.

The entrance into the Morall, which (according to things of Comick pleaſure) properly begins with a Funerall.

SOmetime in the City of Rome there was a famous Emperor named Pontianus, a man of great wiſdome: he took to his wife a Kings Daughter that was very fair, amiable, to all people gracious, & to her Husband right deare; ſhe conceived by him, & was delivered of a Son named Diocleſian. The Child grew apace, and of all people was beloved: and when he was of the age of ſeven years, his Mother the Empreſs falling ſick, and feeling her ſelf that ſhe might not live, ſent after her Lord the Emperor (being rode forth on progreſs) a meſſenger, that he ſhould return without tarrying, if ever he would ſee her alive.

And when he was come, ſhe ſaid unto him, Oh my deere Lord, of this infirmity I may not eſcape, wherefore the naturall & tender love and care that is in me towards you and your Son, makes a ſuit to you before my death; he anſwered, Deſire what you wil, for I ſhal not deny you any thing. That ſaid ſhe, After my death you ſhal take another Wife, as is moſt convenient, wherefore I inſtantly beſeech you, that ſhe over my ſon have no power nor governance, but that he be kept and nouriſhed far from her, and that he may be trained up in learning and wiſedom. The Emperor then anſwered, My moſt deare wife, your petition in all things ſhal be fulfilled and performed: Then turned the Empreſs and gave up the Ghoſt. Many days after, the Empe-

ror

for bewailed and mourned her death, and long after her burying he shewed his heavinels and sorrow, & would in no wise marry or be joyfull.

How the Emperor committed and delivered his Son to the seven wise Masters to be instructed in learning.

UPon a time as the Emperor lay in his bed, he bethought him inwardly of his Son, saying in his heart, I have only but one Son the which shall be mine heire, it is good whilest he is young that he be set to learn cunning & wisedome, by the which he may after my death governe & rule the Empire. Intimating thereby that a worthy Prince taking upon him so great a weight and charge as the government of a Kingdome, ought first to learn to be his owne governor, and to master his own affections. So that when he was early risen up from his Bed, he caused to be called the Lords of his Counsell before him, and of them took advice what were best therein to be done. And they answered, Lord, in Rome are seven wise Masters, who live in great fame for their excellency in Arts, grave Counsell, and Instruction, let them be sent for, & deliver them your Son to be fostered and instructed in learning. The Emperor understanding that, sent his Letters made powerfull by his own Seale, to the seven wise Masters that they incontinently should come to him without delay: And they anon came before the

Emperor, & he demanded of them if they knew wherefore that he had sent for them? they answered, The cause is as your will intendeth, we know not, but if it please you to shew us your minde and intent we be ready to fulfill it to the utmost of our powers. To whom the Noble Emperor said, I have but one Son, the which I shall deliver unto you to conforme in all good wayes of learning & vertue., so that by your doctrine and wisedome, he may more wisely guide and govern the Empire after my decease.

The first Master named Pantulas said Lord, deliver to me your Son, and I shall teach him as much cunning within seven years as I and all my fellows can.

Then spake the second Master, named Lentulus

lus, Sir, of long time I have served you, and hitherto I have had no manner of reward, I demand nothing else of you, but that you deliver me your Son to keep and govern, and I shall make him as cunning within six years as I and all my fellows be.

The third Master named Craton said, My Lord, many times I have been with you upon the Sea in perill of my life, and of you have I had no manner of reward: if that I might for my recompence now, obtaine that you will vouchsafe to commit your Son under my rule and governance, I should informe him as much within five years, if his wit will thereto attain, as I and my fellows can.

Then stood up the fourth Master named Malquarake, who was right lean of body, and said, My Lord, call to your remembrance how that I and all my predecessors have served Emperors, and have received no manner of reward, wherefore I shall ask no other thing, but that ye will deliver me your Son to informe and teach, and I shall make him to take as much science and wisedome within foure years, as I and all my fellows have learned in all our lives.

Then spake the fifth Master that was named Josephus, Lord, I am old, and many times I am called to your Counsell, and you know that my Counsell hath availed and profited you, and so likewise may it be hereafter; yet notwithstanding

standing I desire no more, but that you will deliver me your Son, and I shall instruct and informe him in as much cunning and science, that he within three yeers shall profit in wit as much as I and all my fellows have.

Then came forth the sixth Master named Cleophas who said like to the other, promising him to learne and informe the Child in all their cunning in two years.

The seventh Master rose up and said, who also desired the Child, and promised to learne him within one yeare, the sciences and wisdome of them all.

When all this was done, the Emperor said, My trusty friends, I am very much bound to thank you all, and every one of you, for that you have so earnestly with attention desired to foster and instruct my Sonne: If I should now commit him to one and not to another, thereupon would insue much dissention & variance among you. Therefore to you all & every of you, I commit my son to be nourished & taught. The Masters hearing this, expressing both their greatnes of joy, and forwardnes in will to the Emperor, all with one harmony of consent took and received his Son, and led him towards the Court of Rome. Upon the way spake Craton to his fellows, If we this Child should teach within the City of Rome, there is so great resort and concourse of people, that

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it would hinder and let him in his learning: I know a faire place from Rome some 2. miles, right pleasant and delectable, there let us make a four-square Chamber of Stone, and put him therein, and upon the walls thereof let us paint and write the seven liberall Arts, so that the Child at all times may see and behold his doctrine therein as well as in his Book: and this advice and counsell pleased them all, and was done accordingly in every point. The Masters diligently every day during seven years, taught and instructed the childe, & determined and amongst themselves, and said, It is good that we examine our Disciple to see to what perfection our pains hath arrived at, and to what strength & growth his virtue and knowledge is come to: and they all wisely and religiously accorded to that counsell. Then said Master Pantillas, How shall we prove him? Craton said, Let every one of us as he sleepeth, put under every corner of his Bed an Olive-leafe, and then we shall know if he perceived or felt any thing or not: This done, he awaking, greatly marvelled, & lifted up his eyes towards the roofe of the Chamber fervently: The Masters seeing that, said, Wherefore lift you up your eyes so sharply? he answered, It is no marvail; for in my sleep I saw the uppermost part of the Chamber inclined toward the earth, or else under me it was lifted up. The Masters hearing

this

this, said among themselves, If this Child may live, he shall be a man of great cunning & fame.

How the Emperor by the counsell of the great Princes and Lords of his Empire, wedded another Wife.

The Princes and great Lords of the Empire in the mean time came to the Emperor & said, My Lord, ye have only but one Son, it is possible that hee might happen to dy, and therefore it were profitable that you would wed another Wife, that thereby your joys & hopes might be blest with farre more certainty, and assured happiness in your Race and Issue, to the intent that the Empire of Rome be not left without an Heire. Moreover ye are so mighty, that if it should happen you to get many Children, ye may promote and advance them all to great Dignities & Lordships. Whereunto answered the Emperor, Is it your Counsell that I shall take another Wife? Then seeke me one that is gracious, a pure Virgin, fair, and gentle borne, and then I shall follow your counsell and advice. They went and sought and searched out many Kingdomes and Countries, and at the last they found the Kings Daughter of Castile, that was right fair and beautifull, and her they gave the Emperor to wife, who behaved her self so well, that anon he was so greatly taken in her love, that he forgot all the heavines & sorrow of heart that he had taken for the death of his first Wife. And when they had lived long together without

without Children, and the Empress saw well that she might not conceive, thē when she heard that the Emperor had a Son with the sevē wise Masters to be fostered and taught to the great good & profit of the Empire, she thought in her self and wished his death. And from that hour forth she imagined how she might conspire his destruction. It hapned on a night as the Emperor lay in his bed, he said to the Empress, My most dear & best beloved Wife, I shall now shew & open to you the secrets of my heart, for under the sun is there no Creature that I love so well as you, and therefore trust in my love.

Then said the fair Empress, If it be so as you say, I require of you one little boon or Petition. Desire what you will, said the Emperor, & all that to me is possible, I shall fulfill & give it to you. Then said the Empress, my dear Lord, you know I have no Child by you yet conceived, for which I am sore pensive and heavy; But fame that never conceales it self long to true joy, hath delivered this happy truth to me, that ye have one son only, the which is set to the seven wise Masters to be taught and governed, & him hold I and repute for mine own Son: wherefore I beseech ye that ye will send for him, that I may see him and have consolation of his presence, as though he were mine own. Thereupon answered the Emperor, It is sixtēn years past since that I saw him; your will shall be fulfilled. Incon-

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ment the Emperour sent unto the seaven wise Maſters a Letter ſealed with his ſecret Signe, that upon paine of death they ſhould bring his Son in the Feaſt of Pentecoſt following.

How the ſeaven wiſe Maſters after the ſight of the Emperours Letters, would firſt obſerve the courſe and divine foreſhewings of the Firmament and planets, whether it were good to obey his Commandment or not.

AND as the maſters had read the letter, & had underſtood the will of the Emperor, in the night time they went & beheld the ſtars in the Firmament, whether it would be expedient to take their journey with the child after the Emperors will or not: And they ſaw clearely in the ſtarres, that if they ſhould lead the child in that time aſſigned, at the firſt word he ſhould

ſpeake,

ſpeak, he ſhould dy an evill death: Wherefore they were all right ſorry: and as they beheld another Star, they ſaw, that if they delivered not the Child at the day aforeſaid, they ſhould loſe their heads. Then ſaid one of them, Of twa evills the leaſt is to be choſen: it is better that all we die, than that the Child ſhould loſe his life; therefore that we may ſave the Childs life, let us go to the Emperour. And as they were thus ſorrowfull, the Child came down from his Chamber; and ſeing his Maſters ſo heavy, he demanded then the cauſe of their heavineſs, whereupon they anſwered, Sir, we have receivesyour Fathers Letters, that upon pain of death now in this high Feaſt of Pentecoſt we ſhould lead you to your Countrey, whereupon we have beholden the Firmament, wherein we clærly ſee and find, that if we within the time before preſtred preſent you to your Father, at the firſt word that ye ſhall pronounce out of your mouth ye ſhall be to the moſt vileſt death condemned. Then ſaid the Child, I muſt alſo behold the Firmament with the Stars, & ſo he did, & found clære in a little Star, that if he could abſtaine from ſpeaking ſeven dayes, he ſhould be preſerved and ſave his life. And after he had ſæn this, he called the Maſters, and ſhewed them the Star, and ſaid, Behold my deare Maſters I ſæ perfectly in the Star, that if I abſtain my ſelf by the ſpace of ſeven dayes, I ſhall ſave my life.

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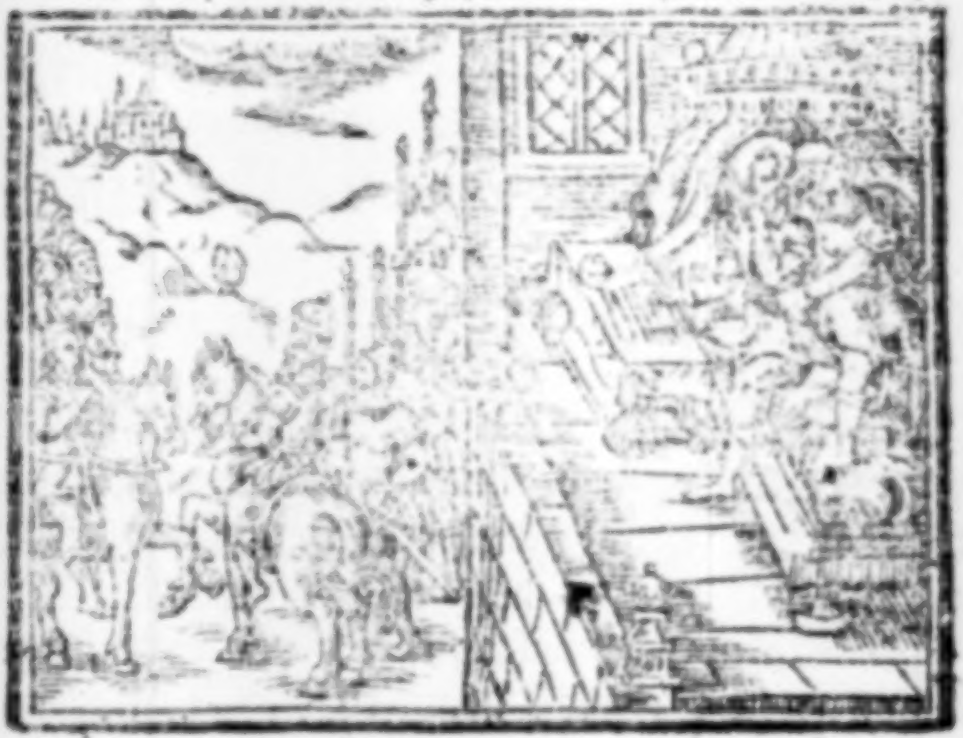
Ye are now seven Masters the wisest of all the world; it is and easie thing for you, that every of you for me one day doe answer, and with your wise answer every of you his day, my life may save and keep; & I in the eighth day shall speak of my self, and shall save my life, and all you from perill. As the Masters had beholden that certaine starre, they judged with themselves that the Child had said troth, saying, Almighty God be thanked, that the wisedome and cunning of our disciple exceedeth us all. Then said the first Master Pantilias, Lord I shall speak for you the first day, and save your life. And Lentulus the second Master said, I shall for you the second day answer: and so consequently every of them promised to answer for himself his day. And this said, they cloathed the Child in purple, and leapt on horseback with a faire company, and hasted them with the Child to the Emperor.

How the Emperor rode to meet his son coming from study with much joy, solemnity and triumph.



When the Emperour perceived that his Sonne was comming upon the way, he rode with great joy to meet him. The Masters understanding the comming of the Emperour, said unto the child, It is best that we depart, that in the mean while we may provide how we may save your life. The Child said, It pleaseth me well that you do so, but have mind of me in time of my necessity: so they took leave and departed towards the City, and the child came after, accompanied most honourably. And as he and his Father the Emperor met, for joy & gladness he took his Son about the neck and kissed him, & said, My dear Son, now is my joy compleat, beholding in thee the treasure of my lifes comfort.

How is it with you? It is long since that I saw you. He bowed down his head and answered nothing: The Father had great wonder why that he spake not, & thought in himself that his Maſters had informed him ſo, that he riding ſhould not ſpeak. And when they were come in to the palace, & were deſcended from their horſes, the Father took his Son by the hand & led him into the Hall, and ſet him nert him, and beheld him, and ſaid, Tell me now how it is with your Maſters, how they have inſtructed you theſe many years paſt ſince I ſaw you? But he inclined down his head and ſpake not: The Father ſaid, Wherefore ſpeak ye not to me? When the Empreſs heard that the Emperors Son was come, ſhe was right joyous and glad, and ſaid, I will go ſee him. She apparelled her ſelf with rich attire, & took with her two of her Gentlewomen, and went there as the Emperor was ſitting with his Son, and ſate her down by the Child, & ſhe ſaid to the Emperor, Is this your Son that hath been nouriſhed with the ſeven wiſe Maſters? And he ſaid, It is my Son, but he ſpeaketh not. She ſaid, deliver to me your Son, and if ever he ſpeak I ſhall make him to ſpeak. Then ſaid the Emperor, Riſe & go with her: The Son did reverence to his Father, as though he ſaid I am ready to accompliſh your will, and ſo went with her.

How

How the Empress led Diocletian the Emperors Son with her into her Chamber for to make good cheer with him, the which he withstood

THe Empress led him with her into her Chamber, and commanded all other to avoid, and set him by her afore her bed side, and said, O my best beloved Diocletian, I have heard much of your person and beauty, but now I am glad that I may see that with mine eyes, which my heart coveteth and loveth: For I have caused your Father to send for you, that I might have solace and joy of your person. Wherefore right heartily I give you knowledge, that I for your love unto this day have kept my Virginity; speak to me therefore, and let us go to bed together: but he gave her no answer. She seeing that, said to him, O good Diocletian, which hast the half of my Soul, why speak ye not to me, or at the least shew me some token of love? what shall I do? speak to me: I am ready to fulfill and performe your will: and when she had thus said, she embraced him, and would have kissed his mouth; but he turned his visage from her, and in no wise would consent: then said she again to him, O Son, wherefore do ye thus with me? Let us sleep together, and then shall ye well perceive, that for your love I have kept my Virginity: but he turned his visage again from her. She seeing that of her he was ashamed, shewed unto him her na-

ked Body & Breasts, and said, Behold, my Son, what Body I have, it is at your will, a servant and subject to your delight & pleasure: give me your consent, or else it shall be hard for me to depart hence with my right minde. He neither shewed her any manner of love, but as much as he could, withdrew himself from her. When she saw that, she said, O my sweet Son, if it please you not to consent unto me, yet speak perhaps for some reasonable cause! Ls here is pen, ink & paper, then write your will, whether I may at any time hereafter trust in your love or not. The Child wrote as hereafter followeth: O Lady, God forbid that I should defile my Fathers Orchard: for I wot not what fruit I should have of it: I know well one thing that I should sinne greatly in the sight of God, and also runne in the malediction of my Father; & therefore from henceforth I pray you to provoke & stir me no more thereto. When she had see & read the writing, she tare it with her teeth, and rent her clothes to her Navell, and all to scratched her Visage, until it was all bloody, & cast from her all the Ornaments of her head, & cried out with a loud voice, Come hither, my Lords, and help me, lest that this rude and evill body shame and ravish me.

How

How the Empress complained to the Emperor of the shame done unto her by his Son.

THe Emperor being in the Hall, and hearing the noise and cry of the Empress, he hastily ran towards his chamber, with many of his Knights & other of his servants following him, to see what was the matter. Then began the Empress to cry and speak to the Emperor in this wise: O my Lord, have pity & compassion upon me; behold, this young man is not your Sonne, but the foulest for ribaldry and actions of Luxury, that ever sinne and heat put strength into: for as you know well, I led him and brought him with me into my Chamber, & would have exhorted and caused him to have spoken: I have done as much thereto as I can or may: and whilst I with my words exhorted and moved him to have spoken, he hath endeavoured himself with me to have sinned; and because I would not with him consent, but withstood as much as I might to fly the same, he hath made my Visage all bloody, and hath all to torn my vesture and ornaments of my head, as you may openly see; and if you had not soon come unto my calling, he had ended in me his most foul and wicked appetite. When the Emperor saw and heard this (filled with great malice and wrathfulness) he commanded his servants that they would lead him to the Gallowes, and hang him. And when the Lords heard thereof, they

said, Lord you have no more but this Son only, it is not good that ye thus slightly put him to death: the Law is ordained for transgressors and misdoers. And if it be so that he must die, let him by the law die, lest it be said, that the Emperour in his great fury and wrath (without law and justice) hath put his only Son to death. As the Emperour heard this, he commanded him to be put in Prison, untill the time that judgement was given against him. And when the Empress understood that the Child was not put to death, she cryed and wept bitterly, and would take no rest; when the night was come, the Emperour entred into his Chamber to go to bed, and found his Wife weeping and sorrowing, to whom he said, O my dear Lady, for what cause are ye sorrowfull? She answered, Know you not how that your accursed Son hath done me so much shame, and so dishonoured you, that ye have commanded him to be hanged, and yet he liveth, and your word is not performed, neither is my shame revenged? To morrow, said the Empress, he shall dy by the law. Then said she, shall he so long live? then it might happen to you as it did to a Burgess of Rome, of whom an Example is mentioned: the Emperor said, I pray you shew me this Example. That shall I do gladly, said the Empress.

The first Example of the Empress.

IN the City of Rome was a Burgess, the which had a fair Garden, wherein he had standing a Noble Tree the which every yeare brought forth fruit of great vertue; for whosoever eat thereof that were sick of any maner of sickness or Leprosie, he should soon be whole, and receive his sight.

It happened upon a day as the Burgess went into his Garden to visit and see the Tree, he espied under the Tree a fair young Imp, & called to him the Gardiner, and said, My friend, of this young Imp I give thee charge, for I trust of that to plant a better Tree then this is. The Gardiner said, I shall it gladly do. Another time the Burgess came again into his Garden

to visite the young Plant, and it appeared unto him that it grew not so much as it should do: & he said to the Gardiner, How may this be? And he said, It is no wonder, for this great tree hath so great Armes and branches, that the Air may not come to the root of the young tree. The said the Burgess, Cut and hew off the Armes & the boughs, that the Air may come hitherto. The Gardiner did as he was cōmanded. The Burgess came againe another time to see the young plant, & thought that it grew never the better, and said to the Gardiner, What is it that letteth this Plant to grow now? And then he said, I suppose the height of the old Tree letteth the same, that the rain may not come thereto, and therefore it cannot grow. Then said the Master unto him, Hew down that Tree to the ground, for I hope of this Plant to have a better then ever that was. The Gardiner hearing his Master, obeyed him, and helved down the Tree; & as soon as this was done, the young Plant all wholly perished, and came to nought, whereof came great harm; for when the poor and sick people perceived that the Tree was destroyed, they cursed all them that were Counsellors and helpers thereto, by the which they oftentimes were healed and cured of their infirmities and maladies. Then said the Empress to her Lord, Understand ye what I have said? he answered, Yea, right well: then said she, I will declare to you the meaning of that which I have said. The

The declaration of the Example.

This Tree, my Lord, betokeneth your moſt Noble Perſon, how that with your counſell and help many poor and ſick folks are greatly holpen & comforted: and the young Imp which is grown under the great tree, is your accurſed Son that now by cunning beginneth to grow, and ſtudieth, firſt, how he may cut off the Arms and boughes of your might, and how to win to him the laud and favour of the people; yea and more unaturally, imagineth to deſtroy your perſon, that he may himſelf raign: but what ſhall then enſue thereof? All poor and feeble people ſhall curſe them, who might have deſtroyed your Sonne, and have not done it: therefore I counſell you whilſt you are in your power, and living, that ye deſtroy him, leſt that the curſe of the people fall upon you. Then ſaid the Emperor, Ye have given me good counſell: to morrow I ſhall condemn him to the vileſt death that can be thought upon. When the day was come, the Emperor went and ſate in Judgement, and commanded his ſervants that they ſhould lead his Son to be hanged, with Trumpets ſounding in token of death. And as the Emperors Son was led through the City, the Common people began to weep and cry, Alas, the only Sonne of the Emperor is led towards his death: and therewithall came Pacilbs the

first Master riding upon a Horse. When the Child saw him, he bowed his head to him, as though he had said, Have mind upon me when you come before my Father, sæ how I am led towards the Gallowes. The then Master said to the Servants, Make no haste, for I hope by the grace of God this day to deliver him frō death. Then said all the people, O good Master, Haste you to the Palace, & save your Disciple. He smote the Horse with his Spurs till he came to the Palace, and knæled to the Emperour, and did him reverence. To whom the Emperour said, It shall never be to thæ good: who answered, I have deserved a better reward. The Emperor said, There thou liest, for I delivered him to thæ in all things well mannered, & now he is brought home dumb, & hath sought to worke his will to the shame of my vertuous Empress, and to the dishonour of his Fathers bed for ever; therefore this day he shall dy, and ye shall all dy a shamefull death. Then said the Master, Lord, forasmuch as your Son speaketh not, the cause thereof God knoweth, and without cause it is not, as ye shall understand: and where you say that he would have committed the sin of enforcement on your Empress, I shall say to you of a troth, He hath bœn in our company by the space of sixtæn yœrs, and we never could perceive such abuse by him. And therefore my dear Lord, I shall shew you one

thing

thing, that if you put your Son to death for the words of your Wife, it ſhall happen to you worſe then to a Knight, which killed his beſt Greyhound through the Words of his Wife, which ſaved his Son from death. Then ſaid the Emperour to the Maſter, Tell me that Example. The Maſter ſaid, Lord, that ſhall I not do, for before I ſhall make an end thereof, your Son might be dead, & then in vain and without hope ſhould I rehearſe it: but if it pleaſeth you this Noble Example to heare, call againe your Son till to morrow; and as you think by reaſon, then do with him you pleaſure. As the Emperour heard that, anon he willed the Child to be called again, and the mean time he ſet him in Priſon while Maſter finiſhed his tale, and then he began in this manner as followeth.

The Example of the firſt Maſter.

THere was a valiant Knight which had one only Son as you have, the which he loved ſo much, that he ordained for his Keepers 3 Nourithers: The firſt ſhould give him ſuck and feed him. The ſecond ſhould waſh him and kæp him clean; and the third ſhould bring him to his ſlæp and reſt. This Knight had alſo a Greyhound and a Faulcon, which he alſo loved right well. The Greyhound was ſo good, that he never run at any game but he took it, and held it till his Maſter came. And if his Maſter diſpoſed him to go unto any battell, if he ſhould not

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spéd therein, anon as he should amount upon his horse, the Greyhound would take the horse tail in his mouth, and draw backward, and would also cry and howl marvellously loud. By these signs, and the one observation thereof, the Knight did alwaies understand that his Journey should have very ill success. The Falcon so was gentle and hardy, that he was never cast off to his prey but he took it.

The same Knight had great pleasure in Justing and Tourney, so that upon a time under his Castle he proclaimed a Tournament, to the which came many great Lords and Knights. The Knight entred into the Tourney, and his Lady went with her maidens to sée it; and as they went out, after went the Nourishers, and left they Child lying alone there in the Cradle in the Hall, where the Greyhound lay nèr the wall, and the Hauke or Falcon standing upon a Perch. In this Hall there was a Serpent lurking, or hid in a hole, to all them of the Castle unknown, the which when he perceived that they were all absent, he put his head out of his hole, and when he saw none but the Child lying in the Cradle, he went out of his hole towards the Cradle, for to have slain the Child. The noble Falcon perceiving that, and he beholding the Greyhound that was sléeping, made such a noise and russling with her wings presently, that the Greyhound awoke

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and roſe up; and when he ſaw the Serpent nigh the Child, anon againſt him he leapt, and they both fought ſo long together, untill that the ſerpent had grievouſly hurt & wounded the Gzeyhound, that he bled ſo ſoze, that the Earth about the Cradle was all bloody. The Gzeyhound, when that he felt himſelf grievouſly wounded and hurt, ſtart fiercely upon the Serpent, and fought ſo ſoze together, and ſo eagerly, that betwæn them the Cradle was overtoſt with the Child, the bottome upward.

And becauſe that the Cradle had four pomels like fæt, falling toward the earth, they ſaved the Childs life and his Uiſage from any hurt. What can be moze expzeſt to make good the wonder in the pzeſervation of the child? Incen-

tinently

nently hereafter, with great pain the Greyhound overcame and slew the serpent, and laid him down again in his place, and licked his wounds. And anon after as the Justs & Tourney was done, the Nourishers came first into the Castle, and as they saw the Cradle turned the upside down upon the Earth, compassed round about with blood, and that the Greyhound was also bloody, they thought and said amongst themselves that the Greyhound had slaine the Child: and were not so wise as to turne up the Cradle againe with the Child, for to have seen what was thereof befallen. But they said, Let us runne away, lest that our Master should put or lay the blame upon us, and so slay us. As they were thus running away, they met the Knights wife, & she said unto them, Wherefore make ye this sorrow, and whither will ye run? then said they, O Lady, wo and sorrow be to us, and to you: Why, said she, what is there happened? shew me. The Greyhound, they said, that our Lord and Master loveth so well, hath devoured and slain your Son, and lieth by the wall all full of blood. As the Lady had heard this, she presently fell to the Earth, and beganne to weep and cry piteously, and said, Alas, O my dear Son, are ye thus slain and dead? what shall I now do, that I have mine onely Son thus lost? Herewithall came in the Knight from the Tourney, beholding his Lady thus crying and

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making ſorrow, he demanded of her wherefore ſhe made ſo great ſorrow and lamentation: ſhe anſwered him, O my Lord, the Greyhound that you have loved ſo much hath ſlain your onely Son, & lieth by the wall ſatiated with the blood of the Child. The Knight very exceeding angry, went into the Hall, and the Greyhound went to meet him, and did fawn upon him as he was wont to do, and the Knight drew out his ſword, and with one ſtroke ſmote off the Greyhounds head; and then he went to the Cradle where the Child lay, and found his Son all whole, & by the Cradle the Serpent ſlain; and then by divers ſignes, he perceived that the Greyhound had killed the Serpent for the defence of the Child. Then with great ſorrow and weeping he tare his hair, and ſaid, Wo be to me, that for the words of my Wife, I have ſlain my good and beſt greyhound, the which hath ſaved my childs life, and hath ſlain the Serpent: therefore I will put my ſelf to penance: and ſo he brake his Sword in three peeces, and went towards the holy Land, and abode there all the dayes of his life. Then ſaid the Maſter to the Emperour, Lord underſtand ye what I have ſaid? and he anſwered and ſaid, Right well. The Maſter ſaid, If ye do put your Son to death for the words of your wife, it ſhall happen to you worſe than it did to the Knight for his Greyhound. The Emperour ſaid, Ye have ſhewed me a fair

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example, and without doubt this day my Son shall not dy. Then said the Master, If ye do so, ye do wisely, and I thank you that ye have now spared him this day for my sake.

The second complaint of the Empress. A sorrow mingled with much cunning and falshood.

When the Empress heard that the child was not yet dead, she began to weep bitterly, & sate her down on the earth in ashes, and would not lift up her head; when the Emperor heard that, he entred into the Chamber, and said unto her, O good wife, wherefore make you all this sorrow, and trouble your self so much? She said, Ask ye that of me? know you not well what great despite and shame I have suffered of your unhappy Son, & now ye have promised me that you would see justice to be therefore executed on him, & yet he liveth: of a treth it will happen to you, as it happened to a Shepherd & a Boze. The Emperor said, I pray you shew me that example for my learning: she said, As yesterday I shewed you one, and saw no good effect that came thereof, to what end should I now do the like? Neverthelesse I shall declare this noble Example unto you, as hereafter you shall hear.

The second example of the Empress.

There was sometime an Emperor the which had a great Forrest wherein was a wilde Boze, which was so cruell & so fell, that he kil-

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led and devoured men going thorow the Forrest. The Emperor therfore being right heavy, proclaimed thorowout all his Dominions, that whatsoever he was that could slay the Boze, should have his onely Daughter to Wife, and therewith his Empire after his death: and as this was in places proclaimed, there was not one man found that durst give this adventure. But there was a Shepherd, who thought in himself, Might I the Boze overcome and slay, I should not onely advance my self, but also my Generation and kindred. So then he took his Shepherds staff in his hand, and went to the Forrest. And as the Boze had of him a sight, he drew towards the Herdsman, but he for fear climbed upon a Tree, and then the Boze began to bite and gnaw the Tree.

So the Herd thought shortly that he would have overthrown it. This Tree was loaden with great plenty of fruit, and the Herd gathered and plucked thereof & cast them to the Boar, insomuch that when he was filled therewith he laid him down to sleep: the which when the Herd perceived, by little & little descended the Tree: and with the one hand he clawed the Boar, and with the other held him upon the Tree, and seeing that the Boar slept very soundly, he drew out his Knife and smote the Boar to the heart and killed him: And so shortly after he wedded the Emperors Daughter; and after the death of her Father, he was made Emperor. Then said she, My Lord, wote ye not what I have said? he said, Right well: Then said she, This mighty Boar, betokeneth your most noble Person, against whom may no man withstand neither by wisdome nor with strength. The Shepherd with his Staffe, is the Person of your ungracious Son, who with his Staffe of cunning, beginneth to play with you, as the Herdsman clawed the Boar, and made him to sleep, and after killed him. In the same manner the Masters of your Son, by their false fables narrations, claw you and gloze with you, until the time that your Son slay you, that he may raign. Then said the Emperour, God forbid that they should do to me as they did to the wild Boar; and said unto her, This day my Son shall

ſhall dy: and ſhe anſwered, If you do ſo, then do ye wiſely. Then the Emperour the ſecond time ſitting in Judgement, commanded to lead him to the place of Execution appointed for that purpoſe: and whilſt he was going, the ſecond Maſter came before the Emperor, doing him great reverence, as before he ſhewed in the cunning of the firſt Maſter, to whom the ſecond Maſter ſaid, O my Lord and Emperor, if you ſhould ſlay your Sonne for the words of your Wife, it ſhall happen worſe to you, than it did to a certain Knight, which for the words of his Wife was unjuſtly put upon the Pillory. The Emperour ſaid, O good Maſter tell me how that happned: and he ſaid, My Lord, I ſhall not ſay it, unleſs you will call your only Son from the death, until the time that the example be told, the which if it turn not you from your purpoſe, then your will be fulfilled. Then the Emperor commaned that the Child ſhould be called again; and under this manner that followeth, the ſecond Maſter began to tell.

The Example of the ſecond Maſter.

IN a city was an ancient Knight which wedded a young wife, & fair, as ye have don, whom he loved above all earthly things: this Knight was a very circumpect and carefull husband, inſomuch that every night he locked in the door with his own hands, and laid the keyes under

his Beds head. In that City there was a law or Custome, that at a certaine hour in the night a Bell was used to be rung, that after the ringing of the said Bell, if any man or woman were by the watch-men found about the streets, all that night they should be kept fast in Prison, and on the morrow set fast upon a Pillory, that all the people might behold and wonder at them.

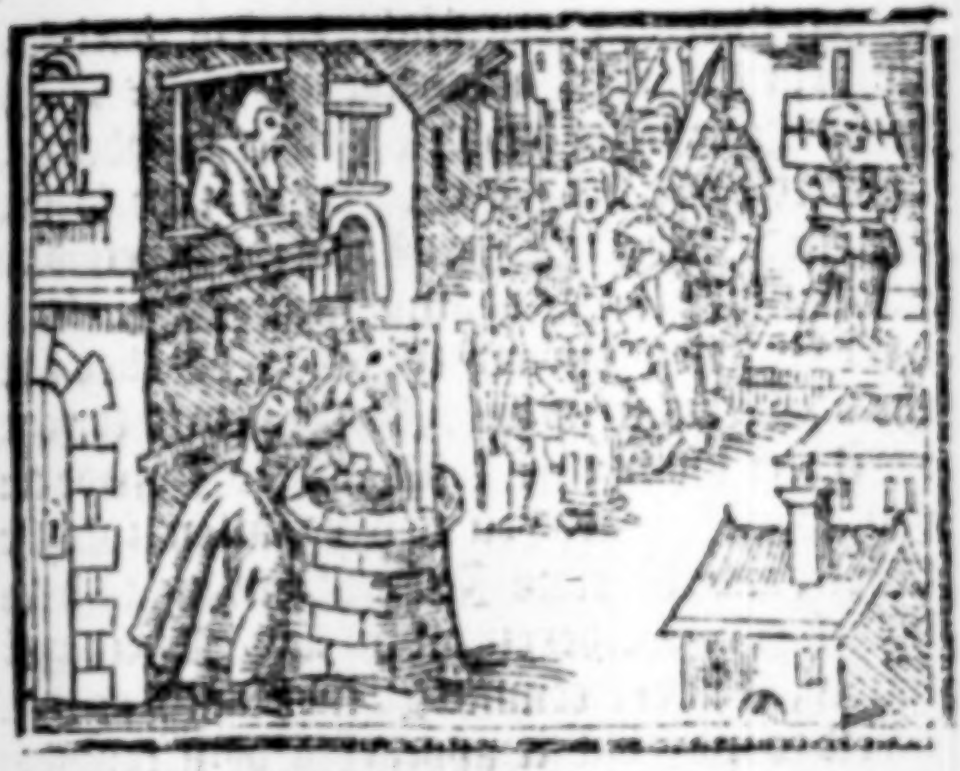
This foresaid Knight had little mind or lust of fleshly deeds, for that he was very old, and might not satiate or performe the desires and appetites of his young Wife; wherefore every night she having a Paramour, her Husband sleeping, took the Keyes from under his Beds head, and went to her Love, and when she came again, all privily she laid the keyes under her husbands head; and thus played she many a time.

So it happened upon a night, that the Knight awaked out from his sleep, and missed his Wife, and also the Keyes under his Beds head. Whereupon he then rose up, and went unto the doors, and found them open, the which he closed and bolted fast within, and then went up again into his Chamber, and looked out at the window towards the Street: and when it was neer about the third Cocks crow, his Wife came from her best beloved, and found the door shut and bolted within: then was she sorrowfull; nevertheless she knocked to have come in. Then spake the Knight out of the window,

O thou most wicked and unclean Wife, now I know and am expert that many times thou hast forsaken my Bed, & gone & done adultery; now thou shalt stand untill the Bell be rung, & that the Watch-men may take thee, & do with thee according to the Law. His Wife answered, My Lord, why do ye lay that to me: for in very troth the cause of my being abroad was for no ill; but I was called by my Mothers maid, and fetched in the night, & when I saw you sleep so sweetly, I durst not awake you, because that ye are old, and therefore I tooke the Keys and went to my Mother, the which is sore sick, that I fear to morrow she must be anointed or anneyled: notwithstanding, for because that I would not you offend, I have hasted me again unto you, and have left her lying in great pain and infirmity, therefore I pray you, for the love of God, let me in before the Bell ringeth. The Knight answered, Ye shall not so come in, ye must there abide untill the time that the Bell ringeth, and untill that the Watch-men come and take you: then said she, That should be to you, and to me, and unto all our Friends and Kindred a great shame and rebuke, therefore for the reverence of Almighty God let me come in: then said he, Have in thy mind, evill and false Wife, how oftentimes thou hast forsaken my Bed, and done Adultery: it is much better that thou suffer shame, and bewaile for thy sinnes here in this

World, than for to suffer pain in Hell. She said againe to him, I pray you for the love of him that was crucified and died on the Crosse, have mercy on me: The Knight said, Thou labourest in vaine, for thou shalt not come in, but thou shalt tarry the comming of the watchmen. She hearing that, said, My Lord, ye know that by this door standeth a Well; if you let me not come in, I shall therein drown my self, rather then all my friends should be ashamed for me: then said he, Would to God that thou had'st been drowned long before that ever thou camest in my Bed. As they thus spake together, the Moon went down, and all was very dark: then said she, If it will not otherwise be, I shal drown my self: but yet before, like a true Christian Woman I will make my Testament. First, I bequeath to God my soule, and my body to be buried in the Church of Saint Peter: and of all other things and goods that God hath sent me, I give unto you to dispose for my soul, after your Wisedome and Discretion. And when she had thus said, she went unto the Well, and there lying a great Stone, with both her Armes she lift it up, and said, Now I drown my self, and so cast the

Stone



stone down into the Well, and went again privily and stood by the door: The Knight hearing the noise, cried with a loud voice, saying, Alas, alas, my sweet Wife is drowned, and so he hastily came down and ran to the Well; and when she saw that the Door was open, presently she entred in and locked the Door, and went up into the Chamber, and lay, and looked out of the Window. The Knight stood by the Well, and cried and wept bitterly, and said, Woe be to me, I have now lost my best beloved Wife: now cursed be the time that I made fast the door against her: when the Lady heard that, she said, O thou cursed old Greyhard, why standest thou there of this time at the night? was not my Body to you sufficient? Wherefore

do you thus go every night to your harlots, and your Whores, and leave my Bed? As he heard the voyce of his wife, he was right glad, and said, Blessed be God that yet she is not drowned: But, my good Lady, wherefore do you lay such things against me? I thought to have chastised you, and therefore I locked fast the door; but in no wise I intended it to your peril: ye know well what sorrow I made for you, when I heard you to have fallen into the Well, and therefore I came thinking to have holpen you. Whereupon she said, Thou lyest falsely, I never committed such faults as thou layest to me; but it appeareth by a common Proverbe, He that is guilty or culpable himself in a sin, he judgeth every man to be in the same; or else, The Father never sought his Son in the Oven, except he had been therein himself: In like case conceivest thou a false surmise of me; but one thing I promise thee, thou shalt abide there until the Watch-men do come, and the Bell be rung, that they may lead thee before the Judges, to abide and suffer the Law. Then said the Knight, Wherefore layest such things to me, that am old, impotent, and most unmeet to delight in such a game? I have dwelt long in this City, and never was defamed; and therefore let me in, that to me or to your self, ye do no shame. She said, Ye said in vaine, It is better that ye forethinke your

sins

ſins in this World, then in Hell; have in minde what the Wiſeman ſaith, A Poor man Proud, a rich man a Lyer, and an Old Man a Fool, God hateth: ſo be you a Fool and rich. What need was it for you to ſlander me? and cannot be content whenas ye have the flower of my youth at your pleaſure, but yet runneſt to Harlots, and therefore it is the great grace of God that you have time and ſpace to forethink it, leſt ye ſhould periſh and be damned for more ſins, and therefore ſuffer your pennance patiently. The Knight ſaid, O my beſt belowed Lady, although it be ſo, yet is God merciful, and he asketh nothing of a Sinner, but that he amend his life, and forethink himſelf, and do pennance for his ſins. Now let me come in, & I will make amends. She ſaid, What devil hath made you ſo good a Preacher? but ſo you come not in. And as they thus ſpake, the Bell rung, and then he intreated very fervently, ſaying, Now ſuffer me to come in, that I be not aſhamed for ever: She anſwered, The ringing of the Bell doth pretend the health of your Soul. And as this was ſaid, then preſently came the Watch-men about the City, and found the Knight ſtanding in the ſtreet, and ſaid to him, O good man, it is not good that ye ſtand here in this hour of the Night. As She heard the voyce of the Watch-men, ſhe ſaid, Goodfellowes, avenge me on that old accurſed

Whore-

Whore-hunter, for ye know whose Daughter I am: This cursed old man is wont every night to leave my bed, and go to his Whores & Harlots. I have long time forborne him, and would not shew it, nor complain on him to my friends, for I trusted that he would have amended his misrule, and it helpeth not: And therefore take him, & punish him after the Law, that all such old doters may take example by him. Then the Watch-men took him, and all night chastised him in prison, and on the morrow they put him on the Pillory. Now saith the Master to the Emperour, Lord have you understood what I have said? & he said, Right well. Then said the Master, If you put to death your Son by the instigation of your Wife, it shall chance unto you worse then to the Knight.

The Emperour said, She was the worst Woman that ever I heard of, that so falsly brought her Husband to shame and rebuke: I say unto you, Master, That for the reason of this example, my Son shall not dy this day. The Master said unto him, If you do so, then you do wisely and that hereafter you shall joy: so I commit you to God, and thank you for your patient hearing, and for the sparing of your Son; and so he departed.

The third complaint of the Empreſs, more full of cunning and diſſembling ſorrow than the former.

When the Empreſs heard that the Child was not dead, ſhe wept bitterly, and entred into her priby Chamber, and tare her skin with her nails, and with a loud voice cried, Alas that ever I was born, that I ſo great a kings Daughter, ſhould be thus entreated and ſhamed, And therefore can have no remedy. Her Gentlewoman hearing this, went and ſhewed it to the Emperor, and he went unto her, and comforted her, ſaying, O Lady, weep not ſo, ne cry not, for it becommeth you not. Who anſwered, The love that I have and owe unto you, maketh me more ſorrow, then the contempt of the death: for why? the inward love of your heart, hath hitherto prohibited, and letted me, that I have not returned again unto my Country, to my Father: but I fear, ſhould I ſo do, it might turn to your harm, for he is mighty to honour me with his riches, and ſo revenge my quarell and deſpight in ſuch wiſe that ye might repent it. Whereto ſaid the Emperor, Let that paſs out of your mind, neither repeat it any more, for as long as I live, I ſhall never fail you. And ſhe ſaid, Lord, I pray God that ye may long live: but I fear me that it ſhall happen to you, as it befell to a Knight, and his Squire that would not bury

his

his Fathers head in the Church-yard, and yet his Father slain for him. Then said the Emperour, shew me the Example how it was that he would not bury his Fathers head. She said, I shall do it for your profit.

The third Example of the Empress.

IN the City of Rome there was a Knight which had two daughters, and one son. And this Knight had so great delight in hunting, jusking, and Tourney, that all things that he might winne and get, he laid and spent it thereupon. In that time lived an Emperor named Octavian, which in his riches of Gold and Silver exceeded all other Kings and Princes, insomuch that he had a Tower full of Gold, and ordained a Knight to have the keeping and charge thereof. This Knight that so haunted Jusking, and other idle Games, came to so great poverty, that he was forced, out of the extremity of his adverse Fortunes, to sell his Heritage, and called to him his Sonne, and said, My Sonne, it behoveth me of your counsell, for necessity and poverty compelleth me to sell mine Heritage, or else to finde some other way whereby I may live: for if I should sell mine Heritage, both you and your Sisters should perish. Then the Son said, Father, if ye can finde any manner of meanes without selling of your Heritage, I should be ready to help you. The Father said,

I have thought on a good counsell: The Emperour hath a great Tower full of Gold, by night-time let us together with Instruments, and dig and hew thorow the Tower, and let us take of the Gold as much as shall suffice us. Whereunto the Son answered, and said, That counsell cannot be amended, for it is better of the Emperours Gold to take, (to help us) then to sell our Heritage.

So they rose up both in the night, and went to the Tower, & with Instruments they made a hole thorow the Wall, and took as much gold as they could both carry away at-that time, and the Knight payed his debts, and haunted again Justs, as he did before, untill all was spent and consumed. In the mean while

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the Keeper of the treasure went into the Tow-
er, and when he saw the Treasure stolne
and a great hole made thorow the Wall, he be-
gan to wax sore afraid, and went unto the Em-
perour, and shewed how it was befallen. To
whom the Emperour said all angry, Why
needest thou to shew that? have I not deliuered
to thee my Treasure, & therefore of thee I will
ask it? Anon as the Keeper heard that, he went
to the Tower again, and set before the hole a
great Vessell full of Pitch melted, with other
gins of subtilty, that no man might come in at
that Hole, but he must nedes fall into the
Vessell; and if he had therein fell, he could no
more come out of it. Not long after, the Knight
had all the Gold consumed and spent, and went
again with the Sonne to the Tower, to steal
more Gold. And as the Father went in first,
anon he was fallen into the Vessell full of
Pitch to the Neck, and when he saw that he
was taken, and could not get out, he said to his
Sonne, Follow me not, for if thou doest, then
canst not escape by any means. Then said the
Sonne, God defend that I should not help
you: For if you are found, we are all but dead;
and if that you may not be holpen by me, I shall
seek Counsail how that you may be deliuered
and holpen. The Father said, There is none o-
ther Counsail, but with thy sword smite off my
head, and as my Body is found without an
head,

head, no man shall know me; and so thou and my daughters may escape & avoid this worldly shame and death. The Son said, Father, ye have given the best counsell: for, if it were so that any man might perceive any knowledge of you, none of us all shall escape the death, and it is expedient that your Head be smitten off: anon he drew out his sword, and smote off his Fathers head, and cast it into a Pit, and then went and shewed unto his Sisters all the matter, who many dayes after pitifully bewailed the death of their Father. After this the Keeper of the Treasure came into the Tower, and found a Body without a Head; whereat he wondred sore, and shewed it to the Emperour; to whom he said, Binde that body at the Tail of an Horse, and so draw it thorow all the Streets of the City, and diligently take good heed if ye hear any cry, or weeping: Whersoever ye hear that, he is the Lord of the House; take all them, and the Body, draw them to the Gallows and hang them. The which the Emperours Servants fulfilled according to his commandement: and as they came against the House of the dead Knight, the Daughters seeing the body of their dead Father, made a marvailous great shrike, and wept pitifully; and as their Brother heard that, anon he wounded himself with a Knife, so that great plenty of Blood came out of the wound. The Ser-

vers

rers when they heard the cry, entred into the house, demanding the cause of their clamour. Then answered the Son, They lament because I am thus wounded: For when my sisters saw my blood so abundantly to go out as you see, they began to weep and cry: and when the Officers saw the wound, they believed his words; and so deceived, went their ways, & hung the Knights body upon the Gallows, where he hung a long time, and his Son would neither take his body down from the Gallows, nor yet bury his head. The Empress said, Understand ye what I have said? the Emperour said, Right well.

The declaration of the Example.

THen spake the Empress thus: My Lord, I fear it will so chance to you & to your son. This Knight for the love of his Son was made poor, and first, he committed theft and brake the Tower: Secondly, caused himself to be beheaded, that his children should have no shame. After, the Son cast the head into the Dike, and buried it not, neither in Church nor Churchyard, and his body he suffered to hang still upon the Gallowes: If that he could not have taken it downe in the day, he might well have done it in the night. In the same manner ye labour night and day, that ye may promote your Son to honour and riches, but without doubt he laboureth for your confusion and destruc-

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on, that he may raign after you in your Empire. Therefore I advise you, that you speedily take away his Life: who living, should suddenly prove the destruction of yours. The Emperor said, You have shewed me a good example. The Knights Sonne when he had smitten off his Fathers Head, would not bury it: without doubt my Sonns shall not do so to me; but he anon commanded his Officers that they should lead him to the Gallowes, and they all obeyed his Commandment hastily: As they led him through the Streets, the People made a great Noise and Lamentation, crying, Alas, alas, the onely Sonne of the Emperour is led again toward the Gallowes: and as they led him, the Third Master named Craton, came Riding upon a Horse, and as the Child saw him, he did bow down his Head to him, as though he had said, Have mind upon me. The People cried, saying, O good Master, hast you, and save your Disciple; and so he smote his Horse with his Spurres, and hasted him to the Palace. And when he came before the Emperor, he honourably saluted him. Who said, Thy comming hither shall nothing avail thee, for I think it long untill I be revenged on thee. The Master said, I hoped at my comming to have been welcome, and so have had a better reward, and not so to be rebuked. The Emperour said, As ye have deserved, so it shall be to you. To whom he said,

My Lord, what have I deserved? The Emperour said, Ye right well deserve death, for I delivered you my Sonne well speaking, and well mannered, for to be informed and taught: & ye have delivered him again unto me dumb, and a Ribauld. To whom the Master said, In that you say he is dumb, that I commit to God: For he maketh the dumb to speak, and deafe to hear. But in that you say he would have enforced your Wife, that would I gladly know, if any Creature have seen that, for there is no malice above the malice of a woman, and that I shall prove by a good Example: that a Woman is full of falshood and unknown deceits; and if you put to death your Sonne for the words of your Wife, it shall happen unto you, as it did to a Noble-man, of his Wife and his Pie, the which he loved marvailously: To whom the Emperour said, I pray you tell me, how that Women are full of malice & leasings: who said, I will not shew it, but if you will first call again your Sonne from death, then at your pleasure I shall shew the Example. Then the Emperour anon made his Sonne to be called againe and to be put in Prison. Then the Master began to tell the Example in this manner and form following.

The Example of the third Master.

There was in a City a rich Burgess that had a Pie, the which he loved so wel, that e-

very

very day he taught her to ſpeak Latine & Hebrew: and when ſhe had learned very perfectly to ſpeak thoſe two Languages, all that ſhe ſaw and heard, ſhe ſhewed and told her Maſter.

This young Spark had a fair young Wife, as we have, the which he loved ſo much: but ſhe on the contrary loved him not, becauſe he was not of that laſcivious reſonnance, for to anſwer her luſts according to the height of her deſires: & therefore ſhe had another fair young man, that ſhe loved above her Husband: and alwaies as her Husband was out of the Town, about his Merchandiſe and other buſineſs, ſhe ſent for her beſt beloved, that they might make good cheer together. The Pie as ſhe eſpied that, told it to her Maſter at his comming home,

in such a manner, as the noise thereof ran all over the City of her adultery, wherefore her husband many times brabled and chid with her: she answered him, Ye believe your cursed Pie, which as long as she liveth shall alwaies make betwixt us variance & discord: and he said, That Pie cannot lie, for what she seeth and heareth, that she telleth me, and therefore I believe her, more than you. It fortuned that this man went into a farre Country about his Merchandise, and as soone as he was gone, his Wife sent for her Friend and Love, to solace & make good cheer with him: but he durst not come by Day light, but abode untill the Evening, lest that he should be marked & seen of the People: and when the night was come, then he knocked at the Gate, and she was ready and opened it: He said, I feare that the cursed Pie shall accuse us: for by her is come great Slander upon us through all the City: Enter in, she said, boldly, and feare not: and they should pass thorow the Hall, where the Pie was in her Cage, she heard him say these words, Dame most beloved, I feare me greatly lest that the Pie should bewray us. And as the Wife heard that, she said, Be still, Fool, it is darke, she may not see you. Then the Pie hearing that, said, If I see thee not, I hear thy voice, and thou dost wrong to my Master, for thou slepest with

my Mistress; and when my Master commeth, I shall tell him. The young man hearing that, said, Told I not you, that the Pie would discover us? And the Wife said, Fear not, for this Night we will be avenged on the Pie: and so they entred into the Chamber, and slept together that Night. About midnight the Wife arose and called her Maid, and said, Fetch me a Ladder, and set it up to the Roofe of the House, that I may revenge me on the Pie. The Maid did even so, and so they went up both, and made a hole thorow the Covering of the House, right over the Pie, and therethorow cast sand, clay, stones, and water upon the Pie, insomuch that the poor Pie was almost dead: and on the morrow the young man went out early at the backdoor. And when the good man was come home, as his custome was, he went and visited the Pie, and said to her, O Pie, my beloved Bird, tell me how thou hast fared the whiles that I have been out? She said, Master I shall tell you tidings that I have heard: Your Wife, as soon as you were gone, by the Night time she let a man come in. And as soon as I heard that, I told him that I would shew it to you, at your comming home, yet notwithstanding she led him into your Chamber, and slept with him all Night: you asked me also how that I have done in your absence, and I say to you of a truth, that I never was so nigh my death, as I

was that same Night, with Snow, Hails, and Raine, that fell upon me so long together, that I was almost left for dead. The Wife when she heard that, said to her Husband: Sir, you believe your Pie, now you may hear what she saith: She complaineth that in the same Night there fell so much Snow, Hail and Rain, upon her, that she was almost dead: and yet there was none of all them that same night, for there was not in the year a fairer nor clearer Night, than it was: and therefore from henceforth believe her not. Then went the good Man to his Neighbours, and asked of them, If that Night were any Tempest or Raine: they answered, That some of them walked that Night, and in all that year they had not seen a fairer Night: then went he to his house, and said to his Wife, I have found you in a truth, for the Night was very fair and clear, as I understood of your Neighbours. You may now know of a truth, said she, that the Pie is a lier, with her leasings she hath sown and made much discord betwixt us: and moreover, I am defamed through the City by her false leasings. Then the Burgess went unto the Pie, & said, Wherefore hast thou made lies and false tales betwixt me and my Wife? is this the thanks that I have for the Meat that I was wont to give thee with my own hands every day? and thou hast also thereby brought my Wife into great defamation & dis-

grace

grace through all the Town. The Pie answered, God knoweth I cannot ly, for that which I saw and heard have I shewed unto you. Then said he, Thou liest, hast thou said unto me that in the same Night was Hail, & Snow, & Rain, that thou hadst nerhand lost thy life, which is most false? And therefore from henceforth thou shalt make no more leasings nor discord betwixt me and my Wife, and so took the Pie and brake her Neck.

Whenas the Wife saw that, she was glad, and said, Now have you done well, now may we all our daies live in rest and peace. And when he had slaine the Pie, he looked up and saw in the top of the house, a Ladder, and a vessell with water, sand, and stones; and then he beheld that he perceived the falshood of his wife, and cryed with a loud voice, Wo be to me, that for my Wives words I have slain my Pie, and also my solace and joy lost, the which in all things said to me truth. And as he had thus done, anon for sorrow he left his Merchandize and all his House, and went towards the Holy Land, and never turned againe towards his Wife. When the Master said to the Emperour, Sir, have you understood what I said? he answered, Right wel. The Master said, Was not that a false and cursed Wife, that so by her falshood, deceit, and cunning, caused the Pie to be slain? The Emperour said, In troth she

was full of falseness: it pitieth me greatly to think upon the Pie, the which for her true saying lost her life. Verily, I say unto you, that you have told me a very fair Example: therefore this day my Sonne shall not dye. Then said the Master, Sir, you do wisely, & I thank you that you have spared your Son this day for my sake, and so to God I commend you.

The fourth complaint of the Empress.

When the Empress heard that the Child was not dead, she made a great noise and crying, in such wise, that she was heard throw the Palace, & said, Wo be unto me that ever I was made Empress; would God that I had died, when I was first brought into these parts. When the Emperour heard the voice and cry that she made, he entred into the Chamber, and comforted her as much as he could, and demanded the cause of her lamentation. Who said, O mine own Lord, have you no wonder though that I be in this sorrow and agony, for I am your Wife, and in your company by your Sonne I am ashamed, and ye saw lately the bloody marks of his inforcement upon my tender flesh, and you have promised me that he therefore should be hanged, and yet he liveth: wherefore should I not be sorry? The Emperour answered, Be content and pleased, and I shall do Justice upon my Sonne to Morrow: but that I forbare him Yesterday, was at the

meeting

moving of one of his Masters by an Example. Then said she, Have you forbid to do justice for one word? were it so, yet for a word ye should not let to do justice; and ye say, For the Example one Master, ye have left it. I feare me it shall happen to you and with your Masters, as upon a time it fortuned unto an Emperour with his Seven Wise Masters: The Emperour said, I pray you tell me that Example: She said, To what intent should I labour in vain? For yesterday I shewed you a good example, and it availed not: & whatsoever I shew for your honour and profit, that the Masters of your Sonne turn up and down to your destruction, as in this present Example I shall clearly shew unto you. To whom the Empereur said, O my best beloved Lady, tell me that Example, that by the same I may the better beware: for though through my clemency I gave one daies benefit of life to my Sonne, I shall not therefore give him his life, for that which is deferred, is not therefore forgiven; and she said, Gladly shall I shew it to you to your profit, and began to tell as it hereafter followeth.

The fourth Example of the Empress.

SOmetime there was in the City of Rome seven wise Masters, by whom all the Empire was governed & ruled, & the Emperor that then was, did never attempt any thing without the Counsell of the Masters: Whereupon they (perce-

(perceiving that the Emperour was so affected and inclined to them, that without them he would not ordain or do any thing:) devised by their Art and Cunning, that the Emperour should clearly see as long as he was in the Pallace, but as soon as he was out of the Pallace he should become blinde: and that did they, to the intent that they might the more freely have the dealing themselves of all things, that appertained to the Emperour: by the which they got and woone to them great profit and incre of goods; and after they had made and wrought the Experiment, they could never change it, nor undoe it afterward, but the Emperour abode still blind many Yeers: And the Seven Masters made and proclaimed throughout the Empire, That if any man had dreamed a dream, he should come unto them with a Florent of Gold or Silver, and they would expound and declare unto him the interpretation of his Dream: whereby, and by other unjust means, they obtained much more substance and Money of the People, then the Emperour did. So upon a time when he sate at the Table with the Empress, he began to sigh and sorrow in himself: and when she perceived that, she enquired diligently of him the cause of his heavines and doleur: the Emperour said, Should it not be heavy and sorrowfull unto me, that I so long have been blind, and cannot see out of my Pallace,

lace, and yet have and finde no remedy? To whom ſpake the Empreſs, and ſaid, Lord hear my Counſell, and it ſhall never repent you, if you do therefore. In your Court you have Seven Wiſe Maſters, by whom ye and all the Empire is governed, if you now behold and marke this in your mind, ye ſhall finde that they are the cauſe of your blindneſs, and diſeaſe: and if it be ſo, they are worthy to dye a moſt ſhamefull death: therefore take, hæd my Counſell and Advice: firſt ſend for them, & ſhew to them your diſeaſe and infirmity, and threaten them on pain of their Lives, that they ſhould finde ſome ſpeedy remedy to help you of your ſickneſs and blindneſs. This Counſell pleaſed the Emperour well. And anon he ſent for the Maſters, and when they were come, the Emperor anon ſhewed unto them his infirmity and blindneſs, and charged them on pain of death, that they ſhould preſently ſeek ſome remedy to eaſe him thereof. Then anſwered they, Ye deſire of us a thing that is difficult and hard to be done thus ſhortly, but give us reſpite for ten daies, and then we will give you your full anſwer. The Emperour was therewithall well contented and pleaſed: Then the Seven Wiſe Maſters went to Counſell, how they may reſtore unto him his ſight again, and in no manner of wiſe could they finde the means how to put away the blindneſs from

the Emperour, wherefore they were all right sorrowfull, and said among themselves, Without we finde a remedy, we are all but dead men. So they went from thence throughout all the Empire, and sought if they could find any remedy or Counsell therefore. It happened them upon a time going through the City, and in the middest thereof, they found Children playing: And after them came a man with a Talent or Florent of Gold, and said to them, Good Masters, this Night have I dreamed a dreame, the Interpretation whereof I would faine know: wherefore I pray you shew me what it signifieth, and take this Gold to you. That heard one of the Children that played among the other, who said unto him, Give me the Gold, & then I shall expound the Dreame. The Man said, I Dreamed this Night that in the midst of my Orchard was a great Spring of Water, whereof came many Small Springs, that all mine Orchard was full, and overflown with Water: The Child said, Take a Spade & dig in the same place whereas you thought that the Water Sprang out, and there shall ye finde a Hord of Gold, so great, that you and all your Children and Lineage shall be for ever Rich: The Man did as the Child had shewed him, and found the Treasure according to his Words. Then went the Man to the Child, and offered him a Pound weight of the Gold that he had

found,

sound, for the Interpretation of the Dreame; but he would receive none, but commited him to the Prayers of the man. The Seven Wise Maſters, when they heard the Child ſo wiſely expounded the Dreame, they ſaid to him, Good Child what is your Name? He anſwered and ſaid, I am called Marlin. Then ſaid the Maſters, We ſee ſurely great wiſedome in you, we ſhall ſhew unto you a ſtrange matter, and of that we would gladly that ye could finde a remedy. The Child ſaid, Shew unto me your matter: and they ſaid, The Emperor of Rome as long as he is in the Palace, he hath his ſight very clear without any Impediment, but as ſoon as he is gone out of the Palace, he is ſo blinde that he cannot ſee. Now if you can finde out the cauſe thereof, and give preſent remedy whereby he may be eaſed and have his ſight again, ye ſhall have a great reward and honour of the Emperour. Then anſwered the Child, I know as well the cauſe of the blindneſs, as the remedy. Then ſaid all unto him, Come with us to the Emperour, and ye ſhall be rewarded ſo largely, that ye ſhall be pleaſed. To whom the Child ſaid, I am ready to go with you. And when they came with the Child before the Emperour, they ſaid unto him, Lord, lo here is the Child that we have brought before you, the which ſhall fulfill your deſire touching the cauſe of your blindneſs, and the recovering of

your

your sight: the Emperor said, Good Masters will you take it upon you, and abide thereby, that the Child shall perform this attempt? then all said, Yea: for we are expert in his wisdom. The Emperor turned himself towards the Child, & said, Will you undertake to tell me the cause of my blindeness, & the remedy? the Child answered, and said, My Lord the Emperor, lead me into your Bed-chamber, and there I shall shew you what is to be done: & as he was therein brought, he said to his servants, take off the cloathes off the Bed, and all the apparell, & ye shall see wonders. And as that was done, they saw a Well smoaking that had seven Springs or Flouds, the which when the Emperor saw, he marvelled greatly, the Child said, Ye see this Well, and without it be quenched, ye shall never have your

sight

ſight; the Emperour ſaid, How may that be? the Child ſaid, But by one way: The Emperor ſaid, Shew us then the means, and if it be poſſible to me it ſhall be done: that I may recover again my ſight, as well without, as within. To whom the Child ſaid, My Lord, the Seven ſprings of this Well, are theſe Seven Wiſe Maſters, who hitherto have traiterouſly Governed you and your Empire, and have made ye blinde as ye be without your Pallace, that they your Subjects by extortion might pill and pole, you not ſeeing it. But now they know not the Remedie, therefore hear you now my Counſell, and this Well ſhall be quenched and extinct: Strike off the firſt Maſters Head, and anon ye ſhall ſee the firſt Spring quench, and ſo by order, one after another, till that they are all beheaded, and anon all the Springs, with the Well, ſhall be vaniſhed and gone away, and ye ſhall have againe your ſight as ye had before: and when this was done and fulfilled, the Well with the Seven Springs was vaniſhed. And as the Emperour had his ſight again, he made the Child a great Lord, and gave him great abundance of Goods: and after ſpake the Empreſs, My Lord, have ye well perceived this Example that I have told you? And he ſaid, Yea, in the beſt wiſe, and ye have recited a worthy and good Example. Then ſaid ſhe, In the ſame manner your Seven Wiſe Maſters

sters intend to do with you, with their false narration, that your Sonne may raign over your Empire, which God forbid.

The Declaration of the Example.

THis well is your son, wherout floweth seven Springs, that signifieth the seven wise Maisters: the which Son ye may not destroy, without the seven wise Maisters be made feeble and brought to nought: that done, this Well that is your Son, with all his wiles shall not escape, but let him taste his death, which befits his deserts, which are shamefull, lest he have a help of his Maisters, and after consequently the seven Maisters; and so you shall govern and guide your Empire in rest & peace. The Emperor anon commanded his servants to lead his Son to the Gallows, which they were loth to do. So was there then a great multitude of people gathered with great noise and bewailing, so that the noise came to the Ear of the Fourth Maister named Mandrake, the which leapt upon his Horse, and hasted him to the Palace, where he met with his Disciple, and did reverence to him, and commended him unto him: and when he came before the Emperor, and had done his obeysance and reverence, as appertained, the Emperour then answered, and said, Little thanks shall you have, you old cursed Caitiffe,

for

for so ill teaching my Sonne. I delivered you my Sonne well speaking, and in all things right vertuous; But you have sent him home a fool, dumb, and a Kibald, for he would have lain with my Wife by force, and therefore all ye forthwith together with him shall be hanged. Then said the Master, My Lord, I have not deserved so ill of you. God knoweth why your Sonne speaketh not, in short time you shall perceive other things, But the time is not yet come: but in that you say he would have oppressed your Wife, that is not truth nor proved, neither for one single person should you judge your Sonne to death. If now for the words of your Wife ye judge your Sonne to die, it shall be worse to you, then to a certain old man and his Wife, and that I shall well prove. To whom the Emperor said, I think you doe with me as sometime Seven wise men did to an Emperor. Whereunto said the Master, The offence or trespass of one, or yet of twenty, may not sound to the rebuke and blame of all other: but one thing of a truth I shall shew you, that evill shall come to you, if ye this day put your Sonne to death for the words of your Wife, of the which I could shew a notable Example. Then said the Emperor, Will ye recite that for your learning? the Master said, If ye will call againe your Sonne from death, then will I rehearse the Example, or else not. The

Emperour commanded that he should be called again, and he desired the Master to say, as hereafter followeth.

The Example of the fourth Master.

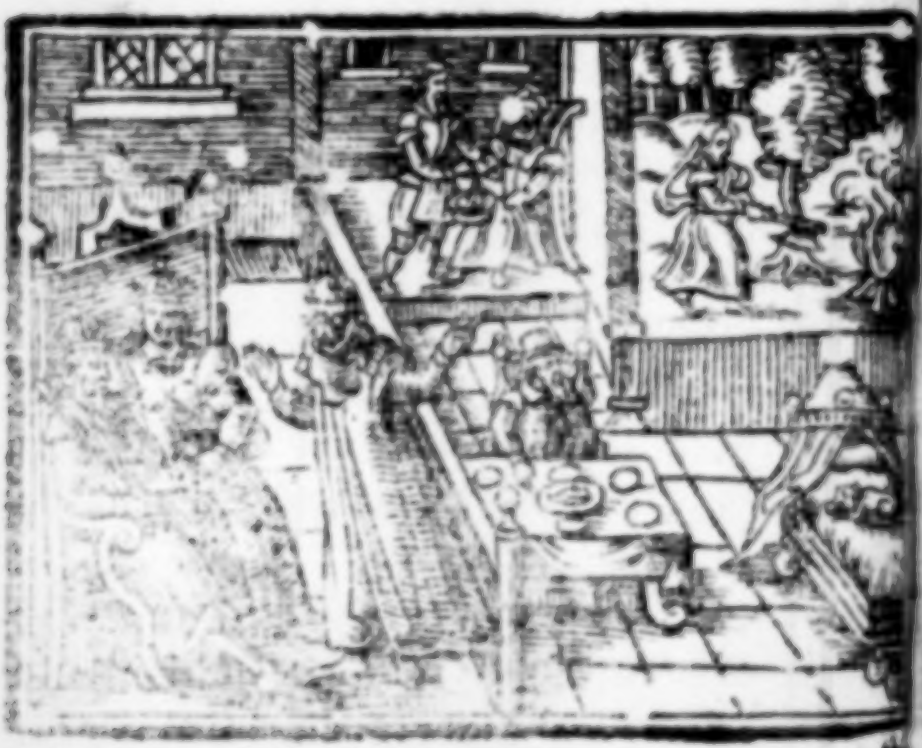
THere was an old Knight and a right wise man that lived long without wife or child, his friends came to him oftentimes and counsailed & erhorted him that he should take a wife.

The Knight thus counsailed and stirred by his friends so oftentimes, at the last he agreed to them; and they gave him to wife the daughter of the Provost of Rome that was rich and of comely grace and feature, whom when he had seen anon he was made blinde, and taken in her love, and began to love her marvailously well: and when they had been married a certain space together, and had no child, Upon a time in a morning it happened that she went to the Church, where she met with her Mother, who said, My daughter, how pleaseth you your Marriage, and your Husband? she said. Right vile; for you have given to me an old lame man to my discontentment in all respects, and I would you had the same time buried me, for I had rather lie and eat with a Swine, than with him, and therefore I may no longer thus endure, but I must needs love another: Then said the Mother, God forbid that, my dear Daughter: how long time have I been with your Father, and yet never hither have I

medled

medled with such foolishness? The Daughter said, It is no marvell, for you both met in your youth together, and the one tooke solace of the other, but I can of him receive no manner of corporall pleasure, for he is cold, and on the bed he lieth as still as a stone, or as a thing immoveable. The Mother answered, If you love another, tell me what he is? The Daughter said, I will love a Priest: to whom the Mother said, It were better, and less sin for you to love a Knight or a Squire: in short time he would be weary of me, and after that he would do me shame, and so would not the Priest, for he will hold and keep his own honour and counsell as well as mine; also Spiritual men be more true to their lovers than secular men be: the Mother said, Hear my counsell, and it will be for your good, Old folkes are wily, and fell, tempt your Husband first, and if you scape him without doing you harm, or smiting, then love the Priest. The Daughter said, I may not so long abide. The Mother said, Upon my blessing abide till you have proved: The Daughter said, Upon your blessing I will abide so long till I have attempted him, but first tell me how I shall prove him? The Mother said, he hath in his Orchard a Tree which he loveth much. cause it to be smitten down while he is out at hunting, and against his comming home make him a fire therewith, and if he forgive it you,

then may you surely love the Priest. As she heard the counsell of her Mother, she went home, to whom her husband said, where have you ben so long? she answered, I have ben at the Church, where I met with my Mother, and with her I have a little talked and communed, and so began properly to dissemble: after Mid-day, the Knight rode forth to Hunt, then she thinking upon the counsell of her Mother, went to the Gardiner, and said to him, Cut down this young Tree newly planted, that I may make a fire thereof, to warm my Lord withall at his comming from hunting, for it is a great wind, and sharp, and cold. The Gardiner said, Madam, that I will not doe, for my Lord loveth this Tree better then he doth all



the other Trees; nevertheless I shall well help you to gather wood enough for to make a good fire, but in any case this I will not hew down. As she heard that, then boldly she took the Axe from the Gardiner, and hewed down the Tree her self, and made the Gardiner, with other, to bear it home. At evening, when her Lord came from Hunting, he was very cold, and she made a great fire, and went and met with him, and set him a stole before the fire to warm him, and as he a little while had sitten, he perceived the odour of the fire, and called to him the Gardiner, and said, I feel by this odour that the new plant burneth in the Fire. The Gardiner said, Lord it is true, my Lady, your Wife, hath felled it down. The Knight said unto her, God forbid that my Plant should be cut down by you: she answered anon, and said, Lord I have done it, knowing the weather cold, and you also cold, and therefore I have ordained this fire for your comfort: and as the Knight heard that, he looked angry upon her, and said, O cursed woman, how wast thou so obdurate, relentless, and voide of pity, as to hew down so gentle a young Tree, the which thou knowest well that I loved it above all my other Trees? When he had so said, she began to weep, and excuse her self, and said, My Lord, I have done it for your good, and doe you take it so grievously, and began to cry, Wo, wo be to

me? Anon as the Knight saw the wæping and tears of his Wife, and heard the cause, he was moved with pitty, and said unto her, Cease off your wæping, and beware how that you doe anger me any more, or trouble me in any thing that I love. The next day early in the morning she went againe to the Church-yard and met with her Mother coming home, and they saluted each other. Then the Daughter said to her Mother, O dear Mother, I will love the Priest, for I have attempted my Lord as you counselled me, but all for nought, for he anon forgave it when he saw me a little wæp. Then said the Mother, Though old men for one time forgive, they double the pain another time, and therefore I counsell you, that you yet once again attempt him. Then said the Daughter, I may no longer abide, for I suffer so much pain for the love of the Priest, that with my tongue I cannot tell it, therefore you shall pardon me, I will no more follow nor doe after your counsell: then said the Mother, For the love that the Childe should have unto the Mother, attempt him yet once more for your Fathers blessing, and then if you go quickly without any harm or beating, love the Priest in the name of God. Then answered the Daughter, It is to me great pain so long time to abide, nevertheless for the blessing of my Father I will once more attempt him, but tell me how I shall begin?

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The Mother said, I understand that he hath a little hound that he loveth well, and keepeth his bed, cast the hound with so great might before his face, against the wal, that it die, and if ye escape without a stripe, or that he forgive you it lightly, then in the Name of God, love the Priest: Then the Daughter said, I will in all things doe after your counsell, for there is no Daughter living at this day, that would more gladly have the blessing of the Father and Mother, then I; and so she bad her Mother farewell, and went to her house again, and that day with great importunity and trouble of her heart, she brought to the night, and when the night was come, she commanded the bed to be covered with purple and cloath of Gold whilest the Knight sate by the fire, and when the Bed was made thus ready, the little Hound as he was accustomed, did leap upon the Bed; and she took him by the hinder legs, and with a wood and malicious heart, she cast him against the Wall that it lay still dead: when the good old Knight saw that, he was marvellously angry, and said with a loud voyce to his wife: O thou most cruell and spightful of all wicked women, how couldest thou find in thine heart to kill that gentle Hound that I loved so much? Lord, said she, have you not seen how the Hound with his feet (coming out of the Fire) hath betrayed our Bed, that is so preciously covered with

rich clothes. And the Knight said, with much anger, Know you not that I loved much better my little Hound then the bed: when she heard that, anon she began piteously to weep, and said, Woe be to me that ever I was born, for all things that I doe for the best, it is all turned into the worst. The Knight out of the treasure of his goodnes and pitty would not suffer the weeping and lamentation of his Wife, but for that he loved her so well he said unto her, Cease your weeping, for I forgive it you altogether: and I counsail you that you beware how that you displease me from henceforth; and so they went to bed together.

Upon the morrow she rose up very early and went to the Church, where she met with her Mother, to whom when she had done reverence as it behoved, she said, Mother now will I love the Priest, for I have attempted my Husband the second time, and all things he hath suffered. The Mother said, O my deare Daughter, there is no cruelty or falshood above the cruelty of old folks, and therefore I counsel you that you yet once more prove him: to whom the Daughter answered, Mother ye labour in vaine, for if you wist what, and how much pains that I suffer for the Priests love, ye should rather help me, if ye loved me. The Mother said, Hear me daughter this one time, and I shall never let you more, Think how

you

you have sucked Milk out of my Breasts, and the great pain that I suffered for you at your birth, by these pains, my dear Daughter, I desire and charge you, that you deny not this good petition, and I promise God no more to let you, nor hinder you of your intent, but rather to help you therefore. Then answered the Daughter, It is to my great pain to abstain me, and to forbear my self so long from the love of the Priest. Nevertheless for the great charge that ye have laid to me, and also for that ye have made a vow no more to let me, but to further me, tell me how I might attempt him, and I shall once more give the adventure. The Mother said, I know well that on Sunday next comming, he intendeth to have us all at Dinner, and there shall be your Father and I, and all your friends, with all the rest of the City; and when you are set in your place, and all the Meats are brought, and served upon the Table, fasten on your keys privily that hang at your Girdle in the Table-cloth, and then doe you fain to have forgotten your Knife, and say these words openly: See what a short wit I am of, I have forgotten my Knife in my Chamber! and then rise up hastily and go, and the Cloth, with all the Meats, you shall cast down, and overthrow upon the ground: and if ye escape without pain, I make a vow to God, that I shall never let you after. The

Daugh-

Daughter said, That I shall gladly do, and so tooke her leave and departed. The Feast day came, and all as the Mother said was bid, the servant made ready and covered the Table, all were set at Table, and the Daughter sat over against her Lord: and when the Table was well served with meats and other things thereto belonging, the Lady of the house said with a loud voyce, Sir how forgetfull I am, I have left my knife in my Chamber, which I must fetch, and so rose up hastily, and drew the Cloth with all the Meat upon it with her, and all the Gold Vessels, and Saints fell upon the ground: the Knight waxed sore angry in heart, but he for shame dissembled before his guests, and commanded another clean Cloth, and other meats to be brought, and with joy and mirth he saluted his guests to eat and make good cheer, that by him they were all made merry: The Feast or Dinner done, they gave all thanks to the Knight, and took their leaves and departed every man towards his own house. Upon the next day in the Morning the Knight rose early and went to the Church and heard Service, after which he went to a Barbour, and said unto him, Sir, are you expert in blood-letting, in what veine that I wil desire you? he said, Sir, I am expert in what vein that you can name in a Mans body. The Knight said, I am well content, come with me;

and

and when he was come to his house, he entred into his Chamber where his wife lay in Bed, and said unto her, Rise up shortly: then said she, What shall I doe up so early, it is not yet nine of the Clock? the Knight said, You must rise up, for you must be letten blood in both your arms: she said, I was never letten blood, and shall I now bleed? then said the Knight, That is truth, and therefore you are a fool. Remember ye not that first ye hewed down my Tree, and another time you killed my little Hound, & yesterday you shamed me before all my friends and Parents? and the fourth is, if that I should suffer you thus to go on, you should for ever confound and shame me. The cause hereof I consider, that you have evill and wild blood within your body, and therefore I will that the corrupt blood shall be drawn out, that ye from henceforth shall put me to no more shame and anger, and so caused to be made a great Fire; and she stood and cryed, and held up her hands towards Heaven, and said, My Lord forgive my trespass, and have pitty upon me at this time, and I shall never more offend you. The Knight said, Pray for no mercy, for the mercy that God hath wrought towards thee at this present, is this, that except thou holdest out thine arm straight, I shall soon have thy heart blood: and he said also to the Barber, Smite hard, and make a deep hole in her arm, or else

I shall give you a great stripe; then smote the Barbor so sore, that the bloud came abundantly out, and the Knight would not suffer him to stanch it, untill the time that she changed her colour in her visage, and as this was done, he bad it to be stopped, and willed the Barbor to smite the vein upon the other arm: then she cryed with a very loud voyce, My sweet Husband, I pray you have compassion upon me, for now I die: The Knight answered, Wife, you should have thought upon this before, ere you had done to me these three evill torments or despights: then she held out her left arm, and the Barbor smote therein a great hole that the bloud came out right ugly, and he suffered her to bleed, untill the time that the colour in her visage was changed, and that she swounded: Then said the Knight, Now binde her arm, and stanch it, and said unto her, Now go to bed and study, and think henceforth how you may amend your life, or else I shall draw the bloud of your heart; and as this was done, he gave the Barbor his reward, and then he went againe unto his own house, and his wife being under the hands of her Maids nigh dead, was led to her bed: she bad one of her Maidens go to her Mother in all haste, and say that I desire her to come speake with me before I die: the Mother when she had heard that, was glad of the correction of her Daughter, and came hastily to her,

ter. When the Daughter heard her Mother, she said, O my most sweet Mother, I am almost dead, for I have bled so much blood, that I believe I shall not escape the death. Then answered the Mother, Said I not unto you that old men are right cruel and fell? will ye now love the Priest? She said, The divel may the Priest confound and shame, I will never love other but my husband. Then said the Master to the Emperor, Lord have you understood me? and he answered, Right well, for amongst all other that ever I have heard, this was the best example. Three evill deeds she did unto her Husband, and I doubt not but if she had done the Fourth, she would have shamed him for ever. Then said the Master, Therefore I counsaile you that you beware of your Wife, lest it happen worse to you, which appeares most manifestly in this example, if you put to death your onely Sonne for her words, you shall be deceived in the end, and so for ever ye shall repent it. The Emperour said, Truly Master this day my Sonne shall not dy. The Master said, My Lord I thank you, that ye for mine example and my sake, this day have spared your onely Sonne.

The fifth Complaint of the Empress.

THe Empress hearing that the Childe was not yet dead, forthwith apparelled her self, & she caused her wains & carts to be in readiness,

as

as though she would have gone home into her own Country to her Father, for to have complained of the great shame that was done unto her, and yet could have no remedy thereof. The Servants seeing that, went and shewed to the Emperour that the Empress was going into her Country: when he perceived that, he went to her, saying, Whither are you going? I hoped that you had loved me so much, that in all the world you would have sought no solace but with me. To that she said, That is true, and therefore I goe from you, for I had rather hear of your death then to see him die: without doubt you delight so much to hear these Masters, that it shall happen to you, as it did to Octavian the Emperour, the which was so covetous that the noblemen of the Empire buried him quick, and filled his mouth full of molten gold. The Emperour said, Dear Wife doe not so, that another time the blame to you and me might be laid. Then said the Empress, Truly Sir the blame is yours, for have you not promised me many times that your Son should die, and yet he liveth? and therefore from henceforth I will no more believe you: Then said the Emperour, It becometh not a King every cause lightly to discuss without great advice, and especially upon his Son, upon whom it is not meet but upon deliberation good counsell, and advisedness to pass Judgement, and therefore I say

and

and pray you, that ye will tell me somewhat by the which I may govern my life, for it is the utter destruction of a King, without advice and indiscretly to give judgement. She answered and said, I will gladly tell you a notable example, so that from henceforth ye will not be covetous or desirous to hear the Masters, and so began to say this form following.

The fifth Example of the Empress.

OCtavianus the Emperour raigned in Rome right rich, and covetous, & above all things he loved Gold. The Citizens of Rome all that time did much harm, and many great outrages to other Nations, in so much that divers Nations and Regions were moved and stirred against the Romanes. In that time there was Master Vergilious, the which excelled in Magick and in other Sciences all other Masters: the Citizens prayed him that he by his art and cunning, would devise somewhat by the which they of their enemies might have warning and knowledge beforehand, whereby that they might provide for themselves the better. He made by his Art and cunning a Tower, and above upon the Tower did cause to be set as many Images, as in all the world were Regions and Provinces: and in the middest of the Tower, he let to be made and set an Image which held in his hand an Apple, or a great round ball of Gold. And every Image of the

Tower

Tower held in his hand a little Bell, and from turning and looking towards his own Province to him assigned: And as oftentimes as any Province would stirre and rebell against the Romanes, so often turned him to the Image of the Land, and rung the Bell: that hearing, the Citizens of Rome armed themselves, and to that Province hasted with all their might, the same to subdue: and so there was no Land so great, that could wreak them upon the Romanes, and therefore were they dread and feared over all the World. Also that Master Virgil made for the solace and comfort of the poor people, a light that always burned, and by that light he made two Baths, the one of them hot in the which the poor people might Bathe and wash themselves: And the other cold, in the which they might themselves refresh. Betwixt that light and the Bathes, he made an Image standing, in whose forehead was written, He that smiteth me, shall anon have vengeance. The Image stood there many years, and at the last there came a Clark, and he beheld the Image, and read the writing, and thought in himself, what vengeance he might finde therefore: I believe better if that any man should smite thee, and that thou fallest therewith to the Earth, he shall find some treasure under thy feet, and therefore is the writing, that no man should have it. And the Clark lift up his

hand

hand, and gave the Image a great ſtroke, that it fell to the ground: and anon the light was out, and the Bathes were vaniſhed away, and he found no Treaſure. The poore Folke perceiving that, were all ſorrowfull, and laid bitter curſes and complaints upon him, that for his ſingular covetouſneſs, had deſtroyed the Image, and had robbed them of ſo great a ſolace and comfort: hereafter aſſembled three Kings, the which by the Romanes had been oppreſſed, and ſuffered great wrongs, and went to take Counſell with them of their Counſell, how they might beſt be avenged of the Romanes: and ſome of them ſaid, We do labour in vain, for as long as there ſtandeth the Tower with the Images, we cannot do any thing againſt them.

At the Counſell aroſe up Foure Knights, and ſaid to the Kings, We have thought on a good remedy how ye ſhall deſtroy the Tower with the Images: and that for to do and bring about, we will our lives ſet to pledge, if that you will be at the coſt. Then ſaid the Kings, What coſt ſhall we be at? They anſwered, We muſt have four Tuns of Gold: Then ſaid the Kings, Take the Gold, and fulfill your promiſe. The Knights took the Gold and went towards Rome, and when that they were come hither in the night, without one of the Gates, in the Ditch full of Water, they drowed one of the Tunnes with the Gold in it, and another

Tunne they drowned by the second Gate, and the Third Tunne they drowned in the Third Gate, and the Fourth Tunns by the Fourth Gate they drowned; and when they had thus done, early in the morning they entred into the City at an hour convenient; and as the Emperour went over to the Part, they did him reverence as it behoved. The Emperour seeing them, demanded from whence they were, of what Science, and what Service they could do? And they answered, We are all of farre Countries, and Soothsayers so perfect, that there is never thing so privily and secretly hid, but that we shall finde it out by our Dreams. We have heard that ye labour and have pleasure in such things, and therefore we came unto you, to know if you had need of our Service. The Emperour said, I shall prove you, and if it be so that I finde you true, you shall have of me great rewards and thanks. They said, We aske nothing for our labours, but the halfe deale of the Gold, which by us shall be found. The Emperour said, I am very well content: and thus they had with the Emperour many words. At night, when the Emperour was going to Bed, they said to him, My Lord, if it please you, this night shall the eldest of us lay his cunning a worke, and Dream: The third day he shall shew you his Dream, and what it signifieth. The Emperour said, Go in God's

Name,

same. And they went forth with great gladness, and all this night they passed over with great joy and mirth, upon trust they should come to a good purpose. When the third day was come, they went early unto the Emperour: the First of them said, My Lord, please it you to go with us without one of the Gates of the City, and I shall shew where there is a Tunne full of Gold hid. The Emperour said, I shall go with you, and see if it be true that you say. And when they were come to the place, they drew out the Tunne that they before there had put: The Emperour when he saw that, was glad, and gave them their part. Then said the Second Dreamer, My Lord, this night shall I Dreame. Then the Emperour said, God give you a good Dreame. The next night came, and he took out the other Tunne, and gave it the Emperour, and took also his share. In like manner did the Third, & the Fourth; upon the which the Emperour was out of all measure joyful and glad, and said, We had not seen heretofore such true and expert South-sayers, or Dreamers, as they were. Then said they altogether at once, as it had been out of one Mouth, My Lord, we are one after another Dreamers, the which as ye have seen, they be all proved: but now if it please, that we may Dreame all together this night, we trust that to morrow it be shewed

where we shall finde a great quantity and substances of Gold and of Riches: The Emperour said, God give you a good Dreame, which to me and to you may be profitable. On the next morrow they came againe unto the Emperour, and said unto him, with countenances full of joy and gladnesse, My Lord, we bring you good and profitable tidings, for this night in our sleepes, such and so great a Treasure is to us shewed, the which if you will suffer it to be sought, you shall be so much enriched, that in this World shall be none like unto you. The Emperor said, Where should we finde Treasure? they said, Under the foundation of the Tower that the Images stand upon. The Emperor answered, God defend that I should for love of Gold, destroy the Tower with the Images, wherewith we from our Enemies be defended and warned. They said to him again, My Lord, have you found us in our sayings otherwise then true and rightfull? The Emperour said, Nay: Oh Lord, said they, We with our owne hands shall give out the Gold, without hurting of the Tower or the Images. And is expedient, that secretly in the night by us it be done, for dread of resort and concourse of the People, lest that it should runne in the noise and clamours of them, and also that they should not take that good Gold away from you and us. The Emperour said, Go in the

Name

Name of God, and do your beſt as you will or can, and I ſhall to morrow early come to you Then went they with joy and gladneſs, and in the night they were let into the Tower, and then with great haſte and diligence they undermined it, and on the next day, very early in the morning, they mounted upon their Horſes, and rode again towards their own Country with great joy and glory, and ere they came without the ſight of Rome, the Tower fell down on the morning enſuing. When it was fallen, and the Senators it perceived, they ſorrowed greatly, and there was a great bewailing thorow-out all the City, and they went to the Emperour, and ſaid, Lord how may it be, that this Tower is thus fallen, by the which we have alwaies had warning afore of our Enemies? he anſwered, and ſaid, To me came four falſe deceivers, and fained themſelves to be Soothſayers, and that they could finde treaſure in the ground. And they ſaid, That under the foundation of the Tower was hidden an innumerable Summe of Gold, the which they ſhould undermine without hurting of the Tower of Images; and I gave faith to them, and they have deceived me. They anſwered him, Ye have coveted ſo much Gold, that for your unſatiate covetouſneſs we ſhall all be deſtroyed: but firſt your covetouſneſs: ſhall fall upon your ſelf: They took him and led him to the

Capitoll, and laid him on his back, and poured his mouth full of Moulten Gold, saying to him, You have desired Gold, and therefore ye shall drinke Gold: and after they buried him quicke. Not long after that, came the Enemy against the Romanes, and overcame and destroyed them all. Then said the Empress unto the Emperour, Have ye, my Lord, this Example well understood? and he said, Right well: Then said she, The Tower with the Images, is your Body with five Wits. As long as you do live, there is none so hardy to trouble or make Warre upon you, nor upon your people; that hath your Sonne right well understood with the Seven Sayers, and with their false narrations of Fables, seek how they may destroy you, for you are overmuch covetous to heare and incline to them, insomuch that they shall undermine you, and cast you under foot, and bring you to nought. The Images are your five Wits, that be all lost. And for as much as you be so childish and foolish, they shall destroy and slay you, and your Son shall obtain your Empire.

The Emperour said, Ye have recited to me a good Example, wherefore it shall not happen to me, as it did with the Tower, but my Son first this day shall taste the bitterness of death. To whom the Empress said, If ye do so, ye shall speed well, and live long.

Then

Upon the third day he commanded him to be led to hanging: and as he was led towards the Gallowes, came riding against him upon an Horse, the fifth Master towards the Palace, and came before the Emperour, and saluted him with all reverence, but he despised his salutation, and put him in fear of his life. And the Master said unto the Emperour, My Lord, I have not deserved to dy, and for to despise my salutation, it is not for your Honour: for your Sonne hath not with us born of such condition, as ye repute him, as ye in short time shall finde: and that he speaketh not, it is of his great wisedome: and know ye, that he shall well speak as his time commeth, though that he now speaketh not, as you in short time shall heare. But forasmuch as that he would have shamed your Wife, that believe not, for so wise a man as he is, would never attempt so shamefull a deed: and if ye put him to death for your Wifes words, ye shall not escape without shame and vengeance, like as Ippocras scaped not without vengeance, for the death of Galenus his Cousin. The Emperour said, That would I faine heare and understand. Then said the Master, What would it availe me to tell you this narration for your profit, if in the mean season your Sonne shall die? Wherefore if ye will call againe your Sonne, it shall be discovered at your pleasure,

and after do as you think best. The Emperor bad call again his Son, and set him in prison, and then began the Master to tell on this manner, as hereafter followeth.

The Example of the fifth Master.

SOmetimes there was a famous physitian named Ippocras, right cunning, the which excelled all other in learning and science; he had with him his Nephew or Kinsman, that was called Galienus, the which he loved so much, this Galienus was of an excellent wit, and applied all his minde and wit to learn of his Uncle the Science of Physick. When Ippocras perceived that, inasmuch as he could, he hid from him his cunning, fearing that he should excell him

him in that knowledg, for the great wit that he was of. As Galienus ſaw this, he ſtudied and exerciſed, inſomuch that in ſhort time he had perfect cunning in Phyſick, for the which Ippocras envied him much. It happened upon a time thereafter, that the King of Hungary ſent his Meſſenger unto Ippocras, that he ſhould come unto him for to cure his Son. Ippocras excuſed himſelfe, and would not goe, but ſent his Couſin Galienus, with his Letters of excuſe for his not comming. And when Galienus was come before the King, he was right worſhipfully received, and they marvailed why that Ippocras would not come. He excuſed him, ſaying, that he had many great things to do, and he might not come; but he hath ſent me in his ſtead, and, with the help of God, I ſhall make whole the Child: that pleaſed very well the King. Galienus went to the Child, and when he had ſeen his Urine, and touched his Pulſes, he ſaid to the Queene, O excellent Princeſſe, I pray you heare; ſuffer my words, and tell me who is the Father of the Child. he ſaid, Who ſhould be his Father, but my Lord the King? Galienus ſaid, I am ſure he is not the Father: ſhe anſwered, If ye will ſay that, for a troth I ſhall cauſe your head to be ſmot off: he anſwered, I ſay once again, that this King is not the Father, and I am not therefore come hither to loſe my head, for I have not de-

ſerved

serued any such reward, and so was going his way. The Quéene spake, O good Master Galienus, if ye will kæpe it secret, and not discouer me, I shall shew and open unto you my heart. The Master said, God defend that from me, that I to any person should shew it, & therefore, O noble Quéen, shew it boldly to me, for it shall never pass my mouth, and afterwards I shall ease and make your Sonne whole: she said, If ye do that, ye shall have a good reward of me, and hear therefore what I shall say. By Fortune I came hither unto my Lord the King of Burgundy, and he was so long conversant with me, that this Child by him I bare. Then said the Master, Fear ye not, I knew that it was so before. And anon he gave the child medicines and compounded things whereof to eat and drink, and the Child was eased of his infirmity. And whenas the KING heard, that the Child was cured and recovered of his sickness, he gave unto the Master a good reward; but of the Quéene he secretly received a great gift, and a speciall thanke, and so went his way. And when that he was come home, Ippocras his Master demanded of him, saying, Have ye beheld the Child? and he said, Yea: then asked he him what he gave him, either compounded or uncompound things. Then said Ippocras That Woman of the Child is not true to her husband. That is troth, said Galienus The Ippocras

was

was moved with envy, and thought in himself, If there be not found a remedy, my Sciences shall no more be set by, but he shall be named and praised above me. And from that day forward, he bethought him, and advised how he might slay him. Upon a day Ippocras called him, and said, Come, go with me to seek and gather Herbs in the Garde. To whom he said, Master, I am ready: and when they were come into the Garden, Ippocras said, I feel that this Herb is right vertuous, stoop down and gather me of it. And Galienus did so, and as they went about the Garden, said Ippocras, Now I well perceive the odour of this Herb, that it is better and more precious then Gold, and therefore stope downe to the Ground, and draw him out with the roots, for it is much worth. Galienus bowed down himself to pull out the Herb, and Ippocras drew out his knife & killed him. After that, Ippocras fell sick to the death, that the strength of his Body failed him, and did as much as he could to help himself, but that could not be: and as the Scholars & Disciples heard of it, they went hastily unto him, and did all that they might or could do, for the profit of his health; but it availed them nothing.

When Ippocras thus perceived, he said unto the Scholars, Go seek me a great Tunne, and fill it full to the brims with water: and when they had so done, he said unto them, Take

now therein an hundred holes; and when that was also done, there went none of the Water out. Then said Ippocras, Behold, my most dear Disciples, how that the vengeance of God is fallen upon me, as ye may openly see, for in this Tunne are an hundred holes, and yet goeth not thereout any drop: Right so there commeth no vertue out of the Herbs to help me: and therefore what you doe unto me helpeth not, for I must dy: But my dear Children, if my Nephew Galienus were now alive, he could heal me, whom I have slaine, and that grieveth me sore, and therefore the vengeance of God cometh upon me: and this said, he turned him to the Wall, and gave up the Ghost. Then said the Master unto the Emperor, My Lord, understand ye well what I have said? he answered, Yea, right well: what hurt had it been to him if Galienus had lived?

The Master answered, It had been right good for Ippocras at that time, had not he died, and therefore by right wise judgement of God, his Medicine availed him not, and therefore I shewed to you that it shall happen worse to you, if that you put to death your Sonne for the words of your Wife, who in time of necessity shall assist and succour you. And consider ye not, that ye have after the first Wife wedded this Wife that ye now have, and so ye may the Third and Fourth, and never shall ye have a

any

ny of them ſuch a Dreame, that ſhall kéep and ſáve you from peril. The Emperour ſaid, Truly he ſhall not dy.

Then ſaid the Maſter, Thou do ye that which both becomes the wiſedome of your yéers, and the Royalty of your perſon: and I commend you to God, and I thank you that ye have this day fáv me ſpared your Son. The Emperour ſaid, I mark this well, that Women are carfty and ſubtill, therefóre I will not fóv you, but fóv my ſelf, ſáve him.

The Sixth complaint of the Empreſs.

WHenas the Empréſs had knowledge thereof, ſhe ſhewed her ſelf ſo froward and impatient a Body, that all that ſaw her or heard her, wondred, and ſaid to the Emperor, your wife ſhe pineth away her ſelf, as though ſhe would ſhortly dy. The Emperor hearing thereof, went to her e ſaid, Wherefóre (good Lady) be ye ſo impatient? ſhe anſwered, ſaying, O Lord, how ſhould I hold it in, when I am the only daughter of a King, e your Wife: e in your company I have had a great deſpite and ſhame, and continually you have promiſed me to punith him, but yet ye perfórme it not. The Emperor ſaid, I wot not what I ſhall do: ye labour from day to day to have my Son put to death, and the Maſters labour to ſáve his life; and amongſt all theſe I know well that he is my Son, but where the troth is, that I know not

not. Then said she, This is the cause whereof I complaine, that ye beleeve the Masters more than you do me: and therefore it shall happen to you, as it did to a King with his Steward.

Then said the Emperor, Tell me that Example, peradventure it may move me the sooner to put my Son to death. She said, Gladly, but I pray you give attention to what I shall say, and began to tell, as hereafter ensueth.

The sixth example of the Empress.

There was a King most proud and deformed in his visage, in such wise, that all Women hated him. This King thought to destroy all Rome, and to take and carry away the Bodies of Peter and Paul: Who while he was in this minde, called to him his Steward that was

right

ught secret with him of his Privy Counsell, and said to him, Go, and seeke a fair Woman that this night may sleep with me. The Steward answered, My Lord, ye know well your infirmity and disease, and that no woman will do evill without a great summe of money. The King said, Think you that for my money I will want one? Have I not Gold and Silver enough? though it were a thousand Florents, I would it gladly give. The Steward hearing that, was anon smitten with covetousness, and went to his own Wife, which was right fair and chaste, and of good kindred, and said to her, O my good Wife, my Lord desireth and coveteth for to sleep with a fair and beautifull woman, and will not forbeare it, though that she would aske of him a thousand Florents, and hath commanded me to provide him one. And therefore I counsell you that ye to us get that Money. The Wife said, Were it so that the King were not so proud and so foule of visage, yet would I not to that evill consent, for the sinne against God. The Steward said, I counsell and command you, and promise you, that without ye consent to me herein, ye shall never hereafter have good day with me: she hearing that, trembled, insomuch that for fears she consented unto him.

The Steward then went to the King, and said, Sir, I have found out a fair Woman, and

she

me is come of a very good House, which will not lese have them a Thousand Florents; and in the morning she shall come, and early in the morning she must away, that she be not seen of the People. The King answered, and said, I am well content. When the Night was come, the Steward led his Wife to the Kings Bed, and made fast the Door, and so went his way: early in the Morning the Steward arose, and went to the King, and said, My Lord, it will be day within a while, it is good that you performe your promise, and let the Woman go: The King said, This Woman pleaseth me so well, that so soon she shall not depart from me. When he heard that, he departed thence all sorry, and tarried but a while, and came to the King againe, and said, My Lord, the morning is come, therefore let the woman go, as I have promised her, lest she be ashamed: The King said, Yet shall she not go from me, and therefore goe out, and shut the Door again. The Steward right sorrowfull, departed, and went up and down with an heavy and angry heart, till that the faire and cleare day appeared, and then he entred again into the Chamber, and said, My Lord, it is cleare day, suffer the Woman to depart, that she be not therewith ashamed. The King answered, I say to you of a troth, she shall not yet depart, for her company is to me right pleasant and acceptable.

The

The Steward hearing that, could no longer forbear to hold his own Counſell, but ſaid to the King, O my good and gracious Lord, I beſeech you ſuffer her to depart, for it is mine own Wife. The King hearing that, ſaid to him, Open the Windows; and when it was open, the faire and bright Day appeared, and he beheld the Woman right fair and goodly, and perceived that it was the wife of the Steward, and ſaid to him, O thou ſtain to Manhood, and ſhame to thy creation; why haſt thou for ſo little Money, ſhamed and undone thy fair and good Wife, and haſt delivered her unto me unwitting? Therefore haſte thee, and get thee gone out of my Realme, and nevermore hereafter come in my ſight; for from henceforth if ever I may ſee thee, thou ſhalt die the moſt ſhametull and horrible Death that ever can be imagined. When the Steward heard that, he fled his way and durſt not abide, and was never ſo hardy any more to come into the Realme. And the King kept that Wife all his life-time in great honor, and gave to her plenty of all things that to her behoved and appertained.

After that, the King cauſed to be gathered and aſſembled a great and mighty Army, of puiſſant men of Warre, and ſo he went to the City of Rome with great might, and beſieged the City on all ſides, ſo long, untill the Romanes would have delivered to him (for to have

departed and withdrawn himself from thence) the Bodies of the holy Apostles Peter and Paul.

Then there was in the City seven wise Maisters, as ye have now, by the Counsell of whom all the City was guided and governed. And the Citizens came to them, & said, What shall we now do? it behoveth us that we give unto our deadly Enemies the Bodies of the holy Apostles, or else the City. Then answered the first Maister, I shall with my wisedom and cunning this day save the City, and the bodies of the Apostles. And so every one of them for ons day, promised to do the like; In like manner as your Maisters have promised your Sonne. With that the King began to assault the City on all parts: Then began the first Maister to say, and to alleadge so wisely, for to have peace, that the King that day left his assault, and withdrew himself a little from the City, and so did all the Maisters do one after another, till the last. Unto whom came the Burgesses of the City, and said, O Maisters, ye shall understand, that the King hath made his oath and sworn, that to morrow with all his Puissance and Strength, he will have and win the City, or else we must be all in jeopardy to lose our lives: therefore in acquitting your promise, defend and kep us from danger, like as your Fellowes before you had done. Then answered the Maisters, & said, Be of good com-

fort

ſay and fear not, for to morrow I ſhall by my cunning ſhew ſuch a work and operation, that the King and all his Puiſſance and might ſhall flie away, and leave the ſiege. The next day the King made and gave a great aſſault unto the City: Then went the Maſter and cloathed himſelf in a marvellous ſtrange veſture, having therein the Feathers or Tailes of Peacocks, and of other Fowls of divers colours, and took two bright Swords, in each hand one, and went therewith, and ſtood upon the higheſt Tower of all the City, and begaune to move and turne, and ſhew himſelf about on all parts towards the Hoaſt, ſo that they might all behold and ſee him; and he held in his mouth the two bright Swords that marvailouſly ſhined: they without of the Kings hoaſt beholding that, ſaid unto him, O King, behold upon the higheſt of yonder Towers a wonderfull thing. Yea, quoth he, I ſee it right well; it is marvailous, but what it is, I know not: They ſaid, It is the God of Chriſtian Folk, that is come out of Heaven, to ſlay and deſtroy us with his two Swords, if we any longer abide. The King hearing that, trembled for fear, & ſaid, What ſhall we do? there is but one way, and that is, that we anon go and depart from hence, leſt that their God avenge himſelf upon us. Then began the King with all his Hoaſt to flie: Notwithſtanding there was no need, but that they

ſt the Maſter were beguiled and deceived: And when the Romanes ſaw that, they haſtily purſued after, armed in good Ordinance, and the King, with many of his people they killed and deſtroyed, and in that manner by great ſubtilty of the Maſters, was the mighty King with his Army ſubdued. Then ſaid the Empreſs to the Emperor, Lord, ye have underſtood what I have ſaid: he ſaid, Yea, very well, with good attention. She ſaid, Now ye have heard what I have ſaid unto you, at the beginning of this narration of the Steward, that the king truſted ſo much, which for covetouſneſs of Gold ſhamed his own Wife, and he for that was driven and baniſhed out of the Land. In like manner your Sonne, for the deſire and appetite that he hath to the Empire, intendeth to confound and deſtroy you. But whiles ye be in your might and power, do with him as the King did with his Steward: If you will not put him to death, then put him out of your Empire, that you may without fear live in ſafeguard of your life. And have you not alſo heard how the King lay before the City of Rome, and how he was by the Wiſe Maſters deceived and ſcorned, and that he with his followers were killed and ſlain? In the ſame manner the Seven Wiſe Maſters intend to deals with you, and with crafty wiles and ſubtilties to deceive you, and in the end, trayterouſly

to

to murther you, ſo that your Son might raign the whole Governor of your Empire. Whereupon anſwered the Emperour, and ſaid, That ſhall not be ſo, for to morrow my Sonne ſhall die. Then he commanded his Servants that forthwith they ſhould leade his Sonne to Execution. When the People had heard theſe tidings, they gathered themſelves together in great Troops, much lamenting and bewailing for the death of the Emperours Sonne. And ſo ſoon as the ſixth Maſter had heard thereof, he haſted him to the Emperours Court, and ſaluted him with great reverence: but he took all things very diſdainfully, and threatned him that he ſhould be put to death with his Sonne, for that he was with them made dumb, and a Ribauld, which was ſhewed towards his Wife. The Maſter ſaid, I have not deſerved to die with your Sonne, but to have great and large gifts; for he is not dumb, as you ſhall hear within three daies, and if he may live ſo long: but if you put him to death for the words of your Wife, Then ſhall I marvail at your wiſedome, and without doubt it ſhall happen to you, as ſometimes it happened to a Knight that ſo much allowed the ſaying of his Wife, that he was bound to an Horſe tail, and drawn throughout all the City to the Gallowes. The Emperour ſaid, For the love of God ſhew me that Example, that I may the better beware of

that perill: that I will not do, said the Master, without you do call again your Son: Then he commanded to call back his Son, and the Master began as followeth.

The Example of the sixth Master

SOmetimes there was an Emperor of Rome which had three Knights whom he loved above all others. In the same City there was an ancient Knight that wedded a fair young Wife, which above all other things he loved, as you doe the Empress; This Lady could sing right well, and melodiously, and with such sweetness, that many drew to her house, and desired her company. It befell on a season, as she sate in her house, her visage turned into the Street, that she might see them that walkt by, and beganne sweetly to sing, that all folke delighted to hear her. By chance came that waies a Knight of the Emperours Court, that heard her voice, and beholding her with a willing mind, and attentive ear, he was exceedingly taken in her love: and then entring into her house, fell into communication and talke with her greatly, but chiefly of Love; and amongst all other talke, he demanded of her what he should give unto her to sleep by her side one night? she answered him, One hundred Florents. Then said the Knight, Tell me when I shall come, and I will give you an hundred Florents. Sir Knight, quoth she, when I have con-

conuenient time I ſhall ſend for you. The next day ſhe ſung again in the ſame place, and it fortuned the ſecond Knight of the Emperors Court to come by that ſame way, the which likewiſe was ſmitten in her loue; and he alſo promiſed her an hundred Florents: To whom alſo ſhe promiſed to ſhew him a time prouided. The third day alſo there came to her a Knight, and he in like manner was taken in her loue; to him likewiſe ſhe conſented, and he promiſed her an hundred Florents, if that ſhe would but giue him knowledge of the time: which ſhe alſo promiſed. Theſe three Knights hauing ſo ſecretly ſpoken with the Lady, that not one of them had any kowledge of anothers comming vnto her. Now the Lady that was thus malicious and deceitfull, came to her Husband, and ſaid, Sir, I haue a ſecret matter to ſhew vnto you, wherein if you will follow my Counſail, our neceſſity and poverty you may largely relieue. Then the Knight replied, Tell it to me, and I will keep it as ſecret as my life, and fulfill to the vttermoſt of my power. She anſwered and ſaid, Three Knights of the Emperours Court haue been with me of late, and another, in ſuch wiſe, that not one of them knoweth of anothers Counſaile, and each Knight hath offered me an hundred Florents. Might we three hundred Florents get, and no man haue knowledge thereof, ſhould it not

be to us) great help, and our poverty be well relieved? Then said the Knight, Forsooth yes, and therefore whatsoever you shall counsail me to do, I shall most willingly perform, Then said she, Thus do I give you counsail, that when these Knights shall come with their Florents, you shall stand behind the Gate, with your Sword drawn in your hand; and as they come (being that they come one after another) you shall slay them, and so we shall have those three Hundred Florents that they bring, without any mans knowledge thereof. The Knight answered, O my most best beloved Wife, I fear that this evill cannot be hid, and then we should therefore suffer death, if that it were known. She answered, and said, I shall this Work begin, and I shall make thereof a good end, and fear it not. When the Knight saw that she was so hardy, it caused him to be the more bold; Then she sent for the first Knight, and he came to her anon without any tarrying to the gate, and knocked, and she asked if he had brought the Hundred Florents. He answered and said, Yea, I have brought them with me. Then she led him in, and he had no sooner entred, but that her Husband murdered him. Immediately after, came the second Knight, who in like manner was slain. And not long after that came the third Knight, whom he also slew; and having finished the Butchery, they con-

conveyed their murthered Bodies into a secret Chamber fit for that purpose. When they had this done, the Knight said unto the Lady, O our Wife, if that these dead Bodies should be found with us, we shall die the most shamefull death, that can be imagined; for it is not possible but that these three Knights will be missed in the Emperours Court, and great search and inquisition will be made for them throughout all this City, where they are become. She answered, and said, Sir Knight, I have now this Work begun, and shall make thereof a good end, fear it not, as I have said before. This Lady had a Brother, the which had the whole Government of the Wealth of the City, that in the Nights watched in the Streets with his fellows: she stood at her Gate, and called unto her Brother, and said unto him, O my most best beloved Brother, I have a secret matter the which I would make knowne unto you, and therefore come in with me, and I will relate it unto you. And when that he was entred into the House, the Lady received him friendly, and gave him Wine to drink, and said, My beloved Brother, this is the cause that I have called you, for I have much need of your Counsell. The Brother answered, and said, Speak it boldly unto me, and whatsoever I may do, to my power, that shall be at your desire without letting. Then said she unto him,

Peter-

yesterday came a Knight in good friendship, but afterwards he fell into such words and variance with my Husband, that he slew him, and he lieth here in my Chamber: Now my dear Brother, we have no man that we may put trust in, but only you; and if that this dead Body be found in our House, we shall be put to death. Now she made mention but of one. Her Brother said unto her, Deliver him unto me in a Sack, and I shall bear him to the Sea: She hearing that, was full glad thereof, and delivered unto him the Body of the first Knight: he took it, and went withall a good space, & cast him therein, and assoon as this was done, he came again unto his Sister, and said unto her. Give me now of the best Wine, for you are of him quit: and she gave him thanks, and went into her Chamber as though she had gone for Wine, and began to cry out with a loud voice, The Knight that was cast into the Sea, is come again: as her Brother heard that, he wondred sore, and said, Give me him; I shall see if he will rise again, and took the Body of the second Knight (supposing it had been the Body of the first Knight) and went to the Sea, and with a great Stone he drowned him therein. That done, he went again unto his Sisters house, and said, Now fill me a Cup of good Wine; for I have drowned him so deep, that he shall never come again. Then said she, Thanks be to

God,

God, and went againe to her Chamber, and
gined her to fetch Wine, and cried with a loud
ice, Alas, wo be to me, he is risen again,
come out of the Sea: And as her Brother
ard that, with a great marvail said, What
Devill is this Knight that I have cast into the
Water, and yet notwithstanding he is come
gain? Deliver him me the third time, and I
ill see if he will come again: Then she
ve to him the third Knight, which he did be-
ve had been the first, and went without
e City to a great Forrest, and made a great
re, and cast the Knight therein; and when he
as almost burnt, the Brother went thence a
tle distance to do his need. Then came
ere a Knight that was to ride to the City,
here in the morning they should have a Tour-
y, and Justing; and it was cold weather, and
rke, and he was not far from the City: and
hen he had sight of the fire, he drew thereto,
nd lighted from his horse & warmed him. The
atchman came & said to him, What art thou?
The Knight said, I am a gentle Knight: then
ake the watchman & said, Thou art no Knight,
t a Devil; for first I cast thee into the water,
e second time with a great stone I drowned
ee, and the third time I have put thee in this
re, supposing thou hadst been burnt, and yet
ou standest here: and then he took the Knight
ith his Horse, & cast them both into the Fire.

After

After that he went again unto his Sister, and told what had happened to him, and said, Now bring me of the best Wine, for after that I had burnt him, I found him again by the Fire with a Horse, & I have cast them both into the Fire: and by this his Sister perceived well that he had burnt a Knight of the Tourney: who anon brought him of the Wine abundantly, and after he had well drunken, he went thence. Not long time after, there fell a great debate and contention betwixt the Knight and his Wife, in such wise that he smote her, so that she had indignation thereof, and waxed angry, and said, that many might hear, O wretch, wilt thou kill me, as thou hast done the three Knights of the Empereours? Certain men hearing that, laid hands on them, and brought them before the Emperour, and the Woman confessed that her Husband had slain three Knights of the Empereours, and how he took from them three hundred Florents. And as it was thus in troth found, both were drawn at an Horse-taile, and hanged upon the Gallows. Then said the Master to the Emperor, Have you understood what I have said? He answered, Right well: I say for certain, that Wife was the worst Woman that might be of all women; for first she moved and stirred him up to murther, and afterwards discovered him. The Master answered & said, Without doubt it shall happen unto you worse,

if

you put your Sonne to death by the advice of your Wife. The Emperor ſaid, My Son ſhall not die this day. The Maſter hearing that, gave thanks to the Emperour, and took leave, and went his way.

The ſeventh complaint of the Empreſs.

When the Empreſs heard that the Son of the Emperor was yet living, as a mad Woman ſhe ran to the Emperor, weeping and crying, ſaying, O unhappy Woman; alas, what will I do: I muſt needs ſlay my ſelf, that am ſhamed, and no puniſhment thereupon done: the Emperour anſwered, God defend that you ſhould have mind on ſuch a wicked deed; but ſuffer a while, and you ſhall have a good end of your cauſe. She anſwered, Sir, the end ſhall be ill; for of that ſhall follow to you and me a great confuſion. The Emperor ſaid, Leave off ſuch talk. She ſaid, Lord, it ſhall come to you & your ſon, as it happened unto a King and to his Steward. I pray you tell me that Example; he ſaid, I will gladly tell it, but I fear that you will hear me no more: For the next day the ſeventh Maſter ſhall ſpeak, and ſave your Son from the death, as the other ſix of his Fellows have done. And the next day after that, your Son ſhall ſpeak; of thoſe words you ſhall hide and take ſuch joy and delectation, that the ſide betwixt us ſhall be wholly forgotten and caſhed away. The Emperor ſaid, That is im-

poſſible

After that he went again unto his Sister, and told what had happened to him, and said, Now bring me of the best Wine, for after that I had burnt him, I found him again by the Fire with a Horse, & I have cast them both into the Fire: and by this his Sister perceived well that he had burnt a Knight of the Tourney: who anon brought him of the Wine abundantly, and after he had well drunken, he went thence. Not long time after, there fell a great debate and contention betwixt the Knight and his Wife, in such wise that he smote her, so that she had indignation thereof, and waxed angry, and said, that many might hear [illegible] thou kill me, as thou h[illegible] of the Emperours [illegible] laid hands on t[illegible] the Emperour[illegible] Husband [illegible] rours, a[illegible] dred Flor[illegible] found, bot[illegible] hanged upo[illegible] ster to the E[illegible] that I have said: [illegible] : I say for certain, that [illegible] Woman that might be of all women; for first she moved and stirred him up to murther, and afterwards discovered him. The Master answered & said, Without doubt it shall happen unto you worse,

if

you put your Sonne to death by the advice of your Wife. The Emperor said, My Son shall not die this day. The Master hearing that, gave thanks to the Emperour, and took leave, and went his way.

The seventh complaint of the Empress.

When the Empress heard that the Son of the Emperor was yet living, as a mad woman she ran to the Emperor, weeping and crying, saying, O unhappy Woman; alas, what shall I do: I must needs slay my self, that am ashamed, and no punishment thereupon done: the Emperour answered, God defend that you should have mind on such a wicked deed; but suffer a while, and you shall have a good end of your cause. She answered, Sir, the end shall be ill; for of that shall follow to you and me a great confusion. The Emperor said, Leave off such talk. She said, Lord, it shall come to you as your son, as it happened unto a King and to his Steward. I pray you tell me that Example; he said, I will gladly tell it, but I fear that you will hear me no more: For the next day the seventh Master shall speak, and save your Son from the death, as the other six of his Fellows have done. And the next day after that, your Son shall speak; of those words you shall have and take such joy and delectation, that the love betwixt us shall be wholly forgotten and cashed away. The Emperor said, That is im-

possible

possible to me, for I shall never forget your love.

Then said she, O my best beloved Lord, if it please you I will tell you one Example, by the which you shall bewars before of many perills to come, and especially of your accursed Son, who intendeth to destroy me by his Maisters. The Emperor said, Tell on your example. And the Empress began to tell of this as hereafter followeth.

The seventh Example of the Empress.

THere was sometime a King, which loved his wife above all things; insomuch that he closed her in a strong Castle, and he bare the Keyes of the Castle himself: the Lady was therefore right heavy and comfortless. Now in far Countries there was a valiant Knight, the which

which on a time lying on his Bed, dreamed after this manner. He thought verily that he saw one of the faireſt Queenes that ever mans eye might behold, whoſe love above all other Wo-men he deſired to obtain; and if that he might ſee her walking, he ſhould certainly have more knowledge of her, by whom towards him great Friendſhip and honour ſhould come. To the Queen the ſame night by viſion of the ſaid Knight, the like was alſo ſtraightly ſhewed, and as yet they have not any knowledge of each other, neither of name, nor yet of fame When the Knight had thus dreamed, and ſeen (as he thought) a moſt vertuous and comely Lady in his ſleep, he then determined in his mind, that his foot ſhould take no reſt, untill the time that he had found out the Lady that to him in his dream ſeemed ſo glorious: And having taken his Horſe, and with him all that was neceſſary for his Journey, he then travailed throughout divers Regions, Countries, and Kingdomes, ſo long, untill at laſt he came into the ſame Land where this aforeſaid Queen was by her jealous Husband incloſed, and kept in a ſtrong Caſtle. And when this ſaid Knight was come into the ſaid City, and having for a certain ſeaſon therein ſojourned, it ſo fell out, that upon a day as the Knight walked by the Caſtle (and knew not as then that the Queen was therein kept) ſhe was at

that

that time sitting in a window, to behold and see the People passing by; and amongst all others, she espied the Knight that before we spake of, and knew him to be the same man, of whom she had dreamed before: and the knight by chance lifted up his eyes, and perceived the Lady sitting in the window, and anon his mind gave him that it was she of whom he had dreamed, and she began to sing a Song of love. And as he heard that, he was then taken with her love. The Knight from thenceforth daily went and walked about the Castle, beholding it all over, to espy if that any manner of way he might get in, to declare the secret of his mind unto her. Then the Lady perceiving that, she presently indited a Letter, and secretly conveyed it unto him from forth the Casement of her Chamber window: And when he had perused over her Letter, and understanding the will of the Lady, he without any delay beganne to haunt Justs and Tournaments, and he did perform so many great and marvellous Acts, that the fame of him came to the ears of the King. And assone as the King heard thereof, he sent after him, and said unto him, Sir Knight, I have heard that you have got much honour at our Justs and Tournaments, wherefore if it will please you to abide here, and dwell with us, we shall give you large gifts, and rewards. The Knight answered and said; O right migh-

ty

y Prince, I am your servant ; would to God hat I could do any service that might be plea- ing unto your Magnificence, without taking f any reward, save one thing before all other I esire. The King said unto him, Shew it unto ne boldly what thing that is. The Knight an- wered, My Lord, seeing that it hath pleased our most Excellent Majesty for to take me for our servant, and one of your most Grave Councel, it now seemeth unto me to be most xpedient for both our delights, that I had a lace nigh unto the wall of the Castle, that I t all times might be the more ready at your alling, when I have need. The King answer- d, and said, I consent unto you ; make it as e shall think best. Then the Knight caused any work-men to be brought before him ; and oing so done, he chose out certain men fit o his purpose, and caused them to build a fair odging near unto the walls of the Tower ; nd all this being finished, he made a Cove- ant with one of the Work-men (whom he ought fittest for that purpose) to make out of is house a secret way to the Queens lodg- ngs : And when this was finished according o his desire, he then killed the Work-man, be- ause he should not make it known unto any. nd having thus done, he then went in unto e Queen, and did her reverence, for it did ecome him so to do ; and they discoursed of

many matters: And having thus passed away the day, and the night drawing on, he then desired that hee might sleepe by her one night, but shee oftentimes did deny him: and yet nevertheless shee consented unto his request. And now they having spent the night in their pleasures, and the morning being come, this Knight then returned to his owne Lodgings: And the Queene beganne to thinke with her selfe, and said, What shall I do? If I should make the King my Husband acquainted herewith, there would two evils come thereof; The one is my shame, and that peradventure hee should utterly forsake me, and cause me to be driven out of his Land for ever. The other is, that he would slay the Knight, for from death it was not possible for him to escape; and therefore I thinke it to be more expedient for me to be secret herein, than for to reveale it unto any. After that the Knight, as often as he pleased him, went in unto the Queene, and did his will with her, and she gave him a Ring, the which the King had given her at her Wedding. This Knight was so famous, and had such excellent knowledge in Justing, that in every battell and Tournament, he had the Victory; for which cause he was held in great estimation and favour with the King, so that he made him his Steward and Governour over all his Region and Land. It happened upon a day

that

that the King was disposed to ride on hunting, wherefore he commanded his Steward to make him ready on the morrow for to goe with him: whereunto he offered himself most willingly. And upon the morrow after they entred into the Forrest, and all that day they chased and followed the wilde Beast, that they were so weary growne, that the King did sit downe by a Fountaine to rest him, and the Knight by his side; and the Knight was no sooner set, but he fell asleepe by the King, having the King upon his finger, which the Queen had given him, which the King perceiving and marking, did know it right well. Now when the Knight waked, and perceiving that the King had seene the King, then he feigned himselfe to be sore sicke, and said unto them, My honoured Lord, I feele my selfe so sore sicke, that if I doe not withall speede I may, haste me unto my Lodging, and there seeke out some present remedy, either by means of Physicke, or by some other course, or else I am but a dead man; and therefore I pray you to give me leave for to go home. Unto whom the King made this answer, and said, Goe my deare Freind, in the Name of God, and see that there be nothing wanting which may procure thy Health, that either my Court or Kingdom can afford. The King had no sooner ended his speech, but immediately the knight tooke his leave of him, and

getting upon his Horse; he then hasted unto his house, and assoon as he was come home, he presently alighted, and hasted him to the Queens Lodgings, and gave her the Ring again; and has told her withal how that the King had espied it upon his finger, when they were both weary and sat down to rest: and withal he told her that he feigned himself to be sore sick, for which cause the King gave him leave for to return back to his Lodging: he also prayed her, that if the King at any time should call for the King, that immediately she should shew it unto him. This done, he took his leave of the Queen, and went down again to his Lodging. And not long after that, the King came unto the Queen, and the Queen received him right lovingly; and after that a little time was passed, the King said unto her, My renowned Lady, shew me where the King is that I gave to you, for I have a great desire to see it. She answered, and said, O my best beloved Lord, to what intent at this time do you desire to see it? Then said he, If you shew it not to me incontinently, it shall repent you. Then she arose up and went unto her Chest, and took the Ring out of it, and having thus done, she brought it to the King her husband: And when he had seen it, he then was half ashamed, and said unto her, My best beloved Queen, O how like is the Knights King, unto this your King,

which

which I saw upon his Finger! For I beleeved that it had been mine, and therefore that was the cause why I did aske so hastily of you for it. And now of this evil suspition I yeeld my self guilty against you, my dear Lady, in this behalf, for the strength of the Tower deceived me; for I thought none could get therein but I my self alone, in regard that no man hath the keeping of the keyes but my self onely. She said unto him, My dear Lord, wonder not, for one King may be like unto another; and workmen do seldome make one piece of work, but that there are others that make the same: but God forgive you in that you have so suspected mee; for you know the strength of the Tower, and the keyes you have alwaies in your presence, and will trust no man therewith. After that, the Knight ordained a great Dinner, and said unto the King, My Soveraigne, it is so that my Lady and Love is come hither from out of my Country to seek mee, for whose sake I have ordained a Dinner to be made, therefore I would intreat your Highnes that you would do me that honour, as to Dine with me at my house this day, and to take such meat as shall be there provided. The King answered, and said, Most willingly will I do unto you that worship and more. The Knight was glad thereof, and then by his secret way he went unto the Queen, and said unto her:

My welbeloved Lady you must doe thus, you shall come to my house the privy way, and you shall clothe your selfe in rich clothing, and deck your selfe with Jewels and other Ornaments, according to the manner and custom of my Country, and then shall you sit at the table with my King, as my Soveraigne Lady, and make him good cheare. She replied unto him after this manner, Sir Knight, I shall be ready to doe all things according to your desire; and when the time appointed was nære at hand, and that the King was comming from the Castle towards the Knights house, in the meane time, by the secret way, the Quæne did enter into the Knights Lodgings (before that the King could come thither) and apparelled her selfe after the manner of the Knights Country. And when the king was entred into the house, she mæting him with Courtly salutations received him: And when the King had beheld her, he demanded of the Knight what Woman she should be that seemed unto him so faire? Then answered the Knight, and said, My renowned Lord, it is my Soveraigne Lady, that now even for the love that she beareth me, is come out of my Countrey after me, to know wherefore I should absent my selfe so long, both from her love and Service. Now their spæch being ended, the Knight caused the King to sit downe at the Table, and made the

Quæn

Quæn to ſit by him, and the King thought that it was his Quæn, and ſaid within himſelfe, O how like is this woman unto my Wife? So the ſtrength of the tower ſtill deceived him, that he gave more faith and credence unto the knights words, than he did his owne eyes. The Quæn began to ſpeak and to talke to the King, and to ſtirre him to eat and drinke and make good cheare: and as the king heard that voyce, then he ſaid unto himſelfe, O bleſſed Lord, how like is this Woman to my Quæn in her behaviour, ſpæch, viſage, and in all other things and Conditions? and ſtill the ſtrength of the Tower deceived him. In the end of the Feaſt, the knight prayed his beloved Lady to ſing a Song before the king, and ſhe began to ſing a Song of Love: When the king had heard her, he knew her voyce, and thought unto himſelfe, Is not this my Wife? And yet how can this be ſhe, I having the keys of the Tower my ſelfe in kæping? and ſo all the time of Dinner the king ſat ſtriving and debating thus within himſelf; But Dinner being ended, he willed the knight that forthwith he would take up the Table, he having ſome urgent occaſions that moved him thereunto; for he was great in thought, and ſore troubled his in minde. Whereupon the knight anſwered, and ſaid, My Lord, what is the reaſon you are ſo melancholy and ſad? What is it that

discontenteth you, bee not much troubled in your mind: And if it please you, we shall make you some pleasant sport, and solace. And the Gentlewoman said, My beloved Lord, if it shall please you with us to abide, we shall make you all the pleasure and delight that this place can afford, in such sort that if your Queen her self were here, shee could not give you more content. Whereupon the King began to be very angry, and said unto him, Take away the Table, for I may no longer here abide until that I have resolved my minde. Then the Knight obeyed the commandment of the King, and instantly took up the Table, giving thanks unto them all, but especially to the King his most Soveraign Lord and Master: Now the King he departed from the Knights house, and went with all haste that might bee unto the Castle, intending to see whether that his Queen were therein, or not: But in the mean time the Queen went in at her privy dore, and assoon as she came therein, slipped off her uppermost Vesture, and then put her self into the same habit, which the King did leave her in. Now when the King had entred therein, he found the Queen in the same clothing, that he had left her in before; and seeing all things fell out contrary to his expectation, he then did embrace her, and most lovingly kissed her, and said unto her, This day have I eaten with my

Knight,

knight, and with his beloved Lady, who hath come out of her Countrey, unto this my Court to find him out, who being together met, and he over much joyed in the sight of her, did presently ordaine a great Feast to be provided, and humbly did intreat me to do him so much grace, as that I would accompany him at his feast: Whereunto I answered, that for the love I did bear him, I would do him that honour, and much more, if he would request me. Whom I having beheld, and she seeming unto me so faire, that since I was born, unto this day, mine eyes have not seen in all the world, one so like as she is to you, insomuch that at the dinner time I was so much troubled with many matters, that I could hardly endure unto the end of the Feast, but that incontinently I must come home to see whether you were here or there. Then the Queen answered, and said unto him, O mighty King, wherefore do you so much mistrust me, having so oftentimes found the contrary? Do you not know (yea right well) that this Tower is so fast, strong, and invincible, as that no man can enter in, or out, without your knowledge? for you have alwaies the keeping of the keyes, and will not trust any man therewith; how were it then possible that I should be there? Sometimes you shall find one man to be like another; you remember of late how you did mistake the

Knights

Knights King, imagined it to be the Ring which you gave me, and have you yet more arguments of suspicion against me? Was it not sufficient for you to debarre me of my liberty for these many years, but that you must néeds be jealous of me besides? I tell thée, O noble King, that if you do not forsake this your jealousie, and also release me out of this place of imprisonment, that before some few dayes be expired, I will end my days herein: for I had rather live as a Servant at liberty, then now for to be a Quæn, and to live herein as a prisoner. Then the King answered, and said unto her, All this that you have related is true, for which cause I ackowledge my self to be guilty of all these accusations; wherefore have patience but for some few dayes, and as sure as I raigne King of this Country and Castle, I will set you at liberty, and so he lovingly embraced her with a kiss, and then returned to his owne Lodgings. Now he had not rested in his Lodging above two dayes before the Knight came unto the Court, and said unto the king, O my honourable Lord, I have of long time served your Highnes, and now it is time that I returne againe into my owne Countrey, and for all the Service that I have done unto your honour, I desire that you would doe but this one thing for me, that is, That you my noble Lord would doe me but this one favour before

my

y departure hence, which is, to give to me
fore the Priest with your owne hand, in the
ce of the Church, my beloved Lady, whom
intend to wed, who hath followed me out of
re Countreys for the love of me, and whom
shall bring thither againe, as my lawfull and
e Wife, the which thing will be unto me
reat worship and honour, when I shall come
nto my owne Country. The King answered,
d said unto him, That petition & much more
an that (if you will desire yet of me) will I
adly doe and fulfill. Then the Knight prefix-
the day of their Marriage, at which day the
d King came to the Church, being honou-
bly attended. The Priest he was ready, and
d adorned with his vestments, for to solem-
ze the Matrimony. The Knight having ap-
relled the Queen in his owne House, after
e manner of his owne Country, and had or-
ained two Knights for to leade her unto the
hurch, and they believed that it had been his
aramour. And when they were come into
e face of the Church, the Priest said, Who
all give this woman to this Knight? Then
e King said, I shall give her unto my owne
night, and took the Lady by the hand, and said
nto her, O good woman, you are much like
nto my Queen, and therefore my love is to
u the greater, and also because you shall be
edded unto this Knight, whom I affect above

all

all other men, and he shal be of my house, and
he put the Queens hand into the Knights hand
and then the Priest after the order of the cer-
monies of the Church bound them, and wed-
them together in the true & faithful wedlock.

And when all these Rites were finished and
done, the Knight spake unto the King, and said
O Noble King, the Ship that I intend to
in towards my Country, is now furnish-
very fitting for my Journey, and now is rea-
for to saple away, wherefore I humbly beseec
your most noble Grace, that it will please yo
for to accompany my beloved wife thereunto
and that you will advertize and admonish h
to love me, and that she should have me in h
bour above all other creatures living, and
much the rather for your good exhortation an
counsel thereunto. Then the King with
great company of his Followers (besides o
thers) went with them, and did accompany
them unto the Ship; For whose departing fr
the Ship, many of them were exceeding so
rowful and heavy. Then the King began
to say unto the Queen, My most dear friend,
hearken now well unto my Counsel, and se
that you follow it, for it shall be to your pro
fit: My much honoured and beloved Knight
hath now wedded and done to you all the wor
ship and honour that in him is, wherefore loo
that you love, honour, and obey him above all

earth-

rthly Creatures, as God hath commaded, that you be unto him true and constant in your dealings: And assoon as this speech ended, he delivered her unto the Knight, ing, My blessing go with you both, and Lord keep and conduct you in safety unto owne Country. Then the Knight and Queen bowed and inclined their heads ne to the King, and gave him thanks for those courtesies and kindnesses that he had for them; and having so done, they com- tted him to the Almighty, and entred into Ship, and the Marriners hoysted up their es, and sayled forth before the Winde, so within a short space the King had lost the t of the Ship: and from thence he went ily unto the Castle, and being thither come, presently went to seek for his Queen; and en he could not find her, he was then moov- in all the parts of his Body, and sought all ut the Tower; he searched so long, until at last he found out the hole of the secret way t the Knight had caused to be made; and as saw that, he wept bitterly, crying out, and , Alas, alas, this Knight in whom I had great confidence and trust, hath robbed me hath taken away my Wife! Was not I ol, that I gave more faith unto the words a Knight, then I did to mine owne eyes? Then spake the Empress, and said, My Lord

have

have you understood what I have said? The Emperour said, Well in the best wise that may be. Then answered the Empress, and said unto him, Remember how that he trusted the Knight, and yet the Knight deceived him: In the like manner you will put your trust and confidence in the Seven wise Masters, and they labour for to destroy me that am your Wife, and you give more credit to their words than you doe unto your own eyes; for you have well seene how your ungratious Sonne hath rent and scratched me, whereof yet I bear and have his tokens and markes about me, as you may plainly see, and also you know right well, how that your accursed Son hath ashamed me, and you marke not how they defend him in this their folly and extream falsehood: therefore it is to be feared, that it shall happen unto you, worse than it did to a King of whom I have spoken unto you already. The Emperour replied, I will believe mine eyes before that I will give any credence to their words, and therefore I say unto you, To morrow I shall do you justice upon my Sonne. The next day the Emperour Commanded that his Sonne should be brought before him, which thing being done according to his desire, he then commanded that his Sonne should be led unto the place of execution, and there to suffer death according to the Law. Then there began to a-

rise

ile a great noise, and much bewailing amongst
e common people, for the death of the Empe-
rours onely Sonne. At the last, when the Se-
enth Master heard and perceived that, he ran
mediately unto the Officers which were lea-
ing him to the Gallows, and said unto them,
y dearly beloved friends, I pray you not to
ake over-much haste, but stay your hands yet
while; for I thinke this day (with the graci-
us helpe and assistance of Almighty God) to
ve and deliver him from all perills and dan-
ers: And from thence the Master hasted him
wards the Emperours Pallace, and there he
d him reverence according to his accustomed
ty: But the Emperour with great wrath
d indignation against him, made him this
swer; Nevermore have you any joyner com-
t in this world, for that you have sent my
nne home both untaught and dumbe, whom
delivered unto you, well speaking, for which
use you shall all be put to death with him.
e Master answered, and said unto him, O
st noble Emperour, the time is not long be-
xt this and to morrow noone; then (by the
ace of God) you shall heare him speak, and
at both wisely and discretly, and unto you
e shall declare the truth of all things, and that
will promise you he will performe to the full,
pon pain of my life, if you will spare him so
ng time: if you finde it not so, then take my

life

life, and the lives of us all. Then said the Emperour, If I might but hear my Son speak, it would give me sufficient contentment, and I would not desire longer for to live. Then answered the Master, and said unto him againe, All this, and more, you shall both hear and see, and confess it be true, if you will but abide this little time, and then shall this dissention be onely knowne, and the strife that hath been betwixt us and the Empress, will clearly be decided. And if that you do not call again that Noble Prince, your Son, but suffer him to be put to death through the words of your most ungodly and wicked wife, I tell you of a truth, that it shall happen worse to you, then it did to a Knight that died for a little blood that he said his wife to bleed, to whom afterwards she was most unnatural. Then said the Emperor, That Example would I fain hear. Then said the Master, Let your Son be called again, and I shall tell you so notable an Example, that during your life you may beware of the untruth and unstedfastness of women. Then the Emperour said, I shall go call my Son back again, upon condition that to morrow I shall hear my Son speak, as you have promised me. The Master said, Do that, my Lord, for it shall so be; and began to tell, as hereafter followeth.

The example of the seventh Master.

There was a Knight that had a fair young Wife, whom he loved intirely, insomuch that he could not be out of her sight. It happened on a time, that they played together at Chess, the Knight by chance held a knife in his hand, and she playing fortuned to smite her hand on the Knife, that a little blood began to appeare. When the Knight saw that his Wife bled, he sorrowed much, and was sore afraid of his Wife, that he fell to the ground in a swound; his Wife seeing that, cast cold water upon his face, insomuch that he came a little again to himself, and said lightly, Call the Curate with holy Sacrament; for I must die, for the blood

that I have seen come out of your Finger, hath smitten death to my heart; then the Priest came and comforted him, and administred the Sacrament unto him, and anon after he died without any tarrying, for whose death, there was made great sorrow and bewaylings, and especially by his Wife: And after that the Obsequies were finished and done accordingly, she went and lay upon the Grave, and there made great sorrow and lamentation, and said, she would never depart from thence, but as a Turtle Dove she would for the love of her Husband there abide, and die: Then went her Friends and Neighbours unto her, and said, What availeth this for his Soule, to live here weeping untill you die? It is better that you goe home to your house, and there give Almes to the poore for the love of God, and that shall more availe your Soule, then in this place to abide. To whom she answered, I pray you hold your peace, you are evill Counsellors, consider ye not how I am from him parted and separated by death, for a little blood that he saw come out of my Hand or Finger? and therefore I shall never from hence depart.

Her Friends hearing that, made her a little House or Lodging nigh unto the Grave, and put therein all things that to her were necessary, went their waies, thinking that within a while she would be weary to be alone, and so desolate

from

from all company, that thereby ſhe ſhould deſire againe the company of the People.

In the City there was then a Law, that if a trepaſſer or offender againſt the Law were hanged, the Sheriffe all the night ſhould watch and keep the dead body, armed: and if it happened that the body of him hanged were ſtollen away, the Sheriffe ſhould loſe all his Lands and his life at the Kings pleaſure. It happened ſome after that the Knight was dead, a man ſhould be hanged for treſpaſs that he had done, ſo that the Sheriffe, according to the Law of the Land, all that night watched by the Gallowes, that was not far from the City, and the Church-yard was not farre from the ſame; then began the Sheriffe to be ſo cold, that he could not poſſibly endure it, but was even ready to die with cold, except that he might ſpeedily warme him, it was ſo extream cold, and ſo great a Froſt; and by chance he beholding from thence about him, and ſpying a fire in the Church-Yard, haſted him and came thereto, and when he was come neere unto it, he called and knocked at the little Houſe: Then the woman ſpake and ſaid, Who is that who at this time knocketh at the Houſe of this ſorrowfull Woman? He anſwered, I am the Sheriffe that hath endured much cold, that I am ready to freeze to death unleſs without delay ye let me in to warme my ſelf: She ſaid unto him, I

fear that if I let you in, ye should shew me such words, that shall cause me to be more heavy. Then he said, I promise unto you, that I shall say no words to your displeasure: then she let him in, and when he had sitten a while by the Fire, and was well warmed, he said unto her, O fair woman, with your license would I fain speak but one word with you: She answered him, Sir, say what it pleaseth you: then he said, O Lady, you be a fair Gentlewoman rich and young, were it not better, and more convenient for you to dwell at home at your House, and to give Almes, then to walke and consume your self here with weeping and crying? She said, Sir Knight, had I known this before, you had not come herein; for I say to you, as I have said to others oftentimes, You know well that my Husband loved you so well, that for a little blood that he saw me to bleed out of one of my fingers, he is dead, wherefore I will here die for the love of him: And as the Knight heard this, he tooke his leave, and went again unto the Gallowes. And when he was come thither, and saw that the Theefe that he left there hanging, was stollen and carried away, he began to wax heavy, and fell for sorrow, and said, Wo is me, what shall I do? for I have left my Life, and all my goods: and he going up and down thus full of sorrow, and knew not what way to turn himself,

self, at the last he bethought himself to go to the desolate Lady, and shew unto her the heavinesse of his heart, to wit, if she could give him any good counsell. And when he was come thither, he called, and she asked him the cause of his knocking: then said he, Madam, I am the Sheriffe that was right now with you, and I would fain shew unto you the secrets of my heart, therefore I pray you for the love of God open the doore: and he went in and said to her, O most vertuous Lady, I am now come to have your counsell and advice, for you know well the Laws of the Land are, that whensoever any man is hanged and stollen from off the Gallowes, then the Sheriffs Life and Goods be in the Kings hands. Now it happened in the time that I was here with you, and warned me, the Theefe is stollen from the Gallowes, therefore I pray fair Lady; for the love of God, give me your best advice, what is best to do: She answered, I have compassion upon you, for by the Law you have lost your life and goods to the King, Do now after my counsell, and ye shall neither lose life nor goods: he answered, Therefore I am to you greatly bound, hoping to have good comfort: she said, Will you then promise to take me to your Wife? The Knight answered, Would God that you were indeed minded? but I fear lest you should disdain so much to humble you unto me, that

am so poore a Knight: she said, I give you my will thereto, and he gave her again his will, and consented to be her Knight during all his life. Then said she, You know well that such a day my Lord was buried, which for the love of me died: take him out of the Sepulchre, and go and hang him up in stead of the Theefe. The Knight answered her, Lady your Counsell is very good. Then went they together and opened the Sepulchre and drew him out. The Knight said unto the Lady, How shall we now doe, because ere the Theefe was taken and hanged, two of his upper Teeth were smitten out of his head: and I greatly fear me, if that were perceived, I should die the death. Then the Lady said unto him, Take a Stone and strike out two of his Teeth: and the Knight answered, Madam, that may I not doe; for while he lived, he was my trusty and well beloved Friend, and it should be to me great rebuke, if I should consent to doe so disloyall a deed unto his body, being dead: she answered, For your love shall I do it; and presently tooke a Stone and smote out two of his Teeth, & said to the Sheriffe, Take him and hang him upon the Gallowes like to the Theefe. And the Knight said, I feare me to doe it; for the Theefe in taking him, was wounded upon his Head, and he lacked both his Eares. O Madam, God forbid that I do so to the dead body

that

that I loved so well in his life. Then said she, Give me your Sword, and I shall for the love of you doe it; and so toke the Sword and smote a manly stroake upon the dead mans forehead, and cut off both his Eares; and when she had thus done, she said, Now take and hang him, without Company: and then the Knight answered, Yet I feare to hang him, for the Horse wanted both his Stones, and if that he were searched and found without, all our labour were in vaine: Then said she, I never saw a man so fearfull, seeing the matter so clear and sure: take a Knife and cut off his Stones. And he answered, That many not I do in any wise, and therefore I pray you spare me, for you know well what a man is without his Stones. She said, For the love of you I shall doe it, and toke the Knife in her Hand, & cut off her Husbands Stones, and said to him, Now take the Churle thus disfigured, & hang him up without dread: and they went both together, and hung the body upon the Gallows, and so was the Sheriffe delivered of the Kings anger. Then said the Lady, Now ye be quit of all your Dangers, and delivered from all Sorrows and Dangers by my Counsell, therefore I desire you (according to your promise) that ye wed me in the Face of the Church: The Knight said, I have made a vow that I will never Wed other so long as you live, which I shall performe. And then he

said, O thou most shamefull and worst Woman of all Women, who would take thee to be his Wife? An honorable and a loving Knight was thy Husband, who for a little blood that he saw issue out of thy Finger, died. Now hast thou smitten out two of his Teeth, thou hast cut off his Ears, & his Stones, and thou hast made him a great wound in his Head; What Devill would Marry thee? And therefore thou shalt never shame good men more, I shall rid thee of thy life; and so he drew out his Sword, & with one stroke he smote off her head. Then the Master said unto Empereur, My Lord, have you understood what I have said? and he answered, Right well. Amongst all women this was the worst, and the Knight rewarded her accordingly, so that shs should no more do men shame: and the Emperor said moreover, O my good Master, might I but once hear my Son speak, I should have no care of my self. Then said the Master, To morrow you shall hear him speak before you, and he shall shew the truth of all the variance betwixt us and the Empress, as I hope; and so took his leave of the Emperour, and departed.

How *Diocletian* the Emperours Son, complained on the Empress; and how he excused himself of her complaint.

And after that, all the Masters assembled together, and took counsell, how & in what man-

manner they should bring the Child out of Prison, and lead him to the Palace: and so they went to the Child whereas he lay in Prison, being mid-day, his will and counsell for to hear: To whom the Child said, What you will, that will please me; but in no wise busie your selves how I shall answer, or what I shall say; for with joy I shall answer all things that shall be demanded of me. When the seven wise Masters heard that, they were exceeding joyfull and glad, and they clothed him in Purple, and in cloth of Gold, and two of the said Masters went before him, and one upon his right hand, another upon his left hand, and the other three followed after him; and before them all went twelve men with Instruments of Musick, who brought him with great honour and melody to the Palace; and when the Emperor heard all this Melody he demanded what it was: then it was told him by standers by, saying, Mighty Emperour, it is your Son which commeth before you, and before all your Lords, to speak and excuse himself of all that is laid unto his charge. The Emperour said, That is good tidings, if I might hear my Son speak. And when the Child was come into the palace, he rode to his Father, and said unto him, Hail my most dear, and most royall Father.

And

And when the Emperour heard the voice of his Sonne Dioclesian, he was so glad, that for joy he fell downe to the earth; but his Sonne hasted to take up the Emperour his Father again, and when he was come to himselfe, then begainne his Sonne to declare and open all the whole mater unto his Father: and then there came so great a Multitude of People into the Palace to heare the Child speake, and the joy and noise of them were great, that the Childe could not possibly be heard. The Emperour considering that, caused Honey to be throwne into the streets, that the People therewith should be busied and avoided out of the Palace, that thereby they might the better heare the Childe speak; but the Folke tooke no regard

all after the Money which was cast abroad. So when the Emperour perceived that, presently he commanded silence upon pain of their lives: And when they were all still, then the Child began to speak, as followeth: O most dere Father, before that I speake any thing, I entreat and beseech you, that the Empress with all her Chamber-maidens may come and be present: and so the Emperour commanded the Empress, with all her Chamber-maidens to come without delay. The Empress hearing that (being in great feare) came with all her Maidens, and the Child commanded them to stand before all the People in a row, that he might see them. Then said the Child, Sir, lift up your eyes and behold the Chamber-maide that standeth there in the green clothing, whom I know the Empress loveth best above all other; Command her to be unclothed unto her naked body, before us all, and see what she is. The Emperour said, My deare Sonne, that would shame us all, to have a woman to stand naked before us: He said, If it be a woman, it is my shame, and if not, let the shame abide in me. When that she was unclothed, they all said it was a man, and so it appeared; whereat they greatly wondered.

The Declaration of the Complaint of the Emperors Son on the Empress.

Then said the Son unto his Father, Behold this Ribauld hath many a night lain with your Wife in your Chamber in Adultery, and hath defiled your Bed, and him the Emperor loveth above all others, the which thing you do not know.

When that the Emperor had seen and beheld these things, he with great indignation and wrath gave Commandment that both the Empress and the Ribauld should be burnt: but the Sonne answered and said, My Lord and Father, make no hast to give judgement before I have reproved her of these grievous slanders that she did thus falsly accuse me of, and that I have declared, how unjustly she hath complained of me, and sought by all means how she might take my Life from me. Then said the Emperour, My dear Sonne, I commit all the judgement into your hands. Then the Sonne answered and said, If she be found false and a lyer, then the Law shall give sentence against her; But my Loyall Father, when you sent after me, at her earnest suite and request then I with my Masters beheld the Stars in the Firmament, by which I might perceive that if I should have spoken any Words unto you, or any other living Creature, within the space of seven daies, I should have died the most

st shamefull death, and for that cause only did forbear to speak untill this present. wheroas the Empress most unjustly hath used me, that I should have oppressed and ished her, therein I say she lieth falsly; for most Adulterously would have provoked me to defile the Bed of my most gracious Lord Father the Emperour. And when she no wise could bring me thereto, then she a Pen, Inke, and Paper, and bad me ite the cause wherefore I would not yeeld that which she so earnestly desired: And en that I had written the cause wherefore would not commit such a great and abomina- sin, and how that I would not my Fathers chard defile: Then began she to tear her athes, and scratch her visage, that it gushed h with blood, and cried with a loud voice, said, This my Son (having a mind full ust) would have wronged your Princely d, and I resisting his lustfull mind, most in- manely hath he torn my flesh. When the perour heard this, he beheld her with a full ntenance, and said unto her in this manner; thou wretched Woman, was it not sufficient fulfill thy foul and lecherous appetite, thou thy Ribauld, but wouldst also have made my nne? Then fell the Empress to the Empe- rs feet, and she cried unto him for mercy. he Emperour said, O thou cursed and most

unhappy

unhapy Woman, thou askest forgiveness, and thou art worthy none to have, for thou hast deserved to die in three manner of waies. The First is, that thou hast commited Adultery. The Second is, that thou most lasciviously hast provoked and stirred up my Sonne, unto most wicked and abominable Sinne, and hast imputed and laid the Crime falsly & unjustly upon him: And the Third and last is, that thou hast every day enticed and provoked me with thy false tales to put my Sonne to death: and therefore the Law shall have his course against thee, and shall condemn thee unto death, according as thou hast deserved.

Then answered his Sonne, and said, Most Noble Father, you know well that for the leasings that she hath laid upon me, I was daily led unto hanging; but my Maisters with the helpe of God, have delivered me. O my most honourable Lord and Father, it was said unto you by the Empress, that I would also by the helpe of my Maisters depose you out of your Empire, and that I did labour by all meanes possible to destroy you, and to sit my selfe in your Kingdome: would you not then have much greived and sorrowed? Have you not the whole command and government of this your Kingdome? wherefore then should I not use all the knowledge and skill I have to helpe you, my most honoured Father, rather then any man-

ner

n of way for to destroy you: And now see-
g that from you I have my living, I will re-
te you for my Soveraign Lord and Father,
ring the Term of my Life, and I will not in
y manner deprive you of your Honour, but
shall labour and busie my selfe about the go-
rning of the same, and all your Commands-
ents I shall fulfill in every thing: But it is
the same manner as the Father that cast his
nne into the Sea for to drowne him, because
said that he should live to see him for to be a
reater Lord then his Father was, and yet the
nne by the Providence of God was saved;
he became a greater Lord then his Father,
yet was no hinderance to him, but rather
sited him much: also you see and remember
at my life & carriage shall never hinder you,
t it shall be to your joy and comfort. Then
d the Emperour, Blessed be the Almighty
od, and the houre that ever I begat thee, and
ired to have such a Son that I find so wise
experte in all good things: tell me an Exam-
e, by the which we may perfectly understand
wisedome, and that my heart may the better
joy thee.

Then said the Sonne, My honourable Fa-
er, Command first silence to be made of your
people, that I be not letted in my words till
t I have done: And when that is ended,
e Sentence with Rightcousness of the Law

upon

upon me, and upon the Empress. Then commanded the Emperour silence, and the Child began to tell in ample manner, as hereafter followeth.

The example of *Dioclesian*, the Emperours Son.

THere was a King which had but one Son, that he loved right dear in the beginning, as ye now all only have loved me: whom he delivered unto a Master that dwelt in a far country, for to be brought up in learning and knowledge. This Child as he waxed in years, so he encreased in wisedome and knowledge, and profitted himself very much therein. And when he had been with his Master seven years, his Father desired to see him, and sent Letters unto him, that he should come again into his Country, and visit his Friends, in like sort as you have sent for me. The Child was obedient to his Father, and came at his Commandment: for whose comming, he did exceedingly joy, for that he was grown as well in comelinesse of Body, as also in doctrine and learning; and to every man he appeared pleasant and gentle.

It

It happened upon a day, that the Father and the Mother ſitting at the Table, and the Child ſerved them, a Nightingale came flying before the Window whereas they ſats, and began to ſing ſweetly, that they marvailed: and the Knight ſaid, O how ſweetly this Bird ſingeth! well were he that could underſtand his Song, and could ſhew the interpretation thereof. Then ſaid the Son, Ay worſhipfull father, the Song of this Nightingale I could well declare, but I fear your diſpleaſure. The father ſaid, Say boldly my Sonne the Interpretation of the Bird, and then ye ſhall prove whether I ſhall be angry or not; but I ſhall mark well the reaſon of mine anger: And when the Son heard that, he ſaid, The Nigh-

tingal hath said in his song, that I shall become a great Lord, and I shall be worshipped and honoured of all Men, and namely of my Father: the which shall bring me Water to wash my hands, and my Mother shall hold the Towell. The Father said, Thou shalt never see the day such service of us to have, nor none such dignity shall follow thee; & in great madness and wodness, he took his Son upon his shoulder, and ran to the Sea, and cast him in, & said, Ly there the interpreter of the Birds song. The Child could swim, and swimmed to a Land, where he was four Daies without Meat or Drink: the fifth day there came a Ship sayling, & as the Child saw that, he called to the Ship-men, and said, For the love of God deliver me from the peril of death. The Shipmen saw that it was a fair yong man, and they had compassion on him, and went with their Boat to fetch him aboard, and carried him into a far Countrey, and sold him there to a Duke. The Child grew very Proper and Fair, and the Duke loved him much, and had him greatly in favour.

And upon a time the King of that Realm did call a generall assembly of all the great Lords, and Noble-men, within the Realm together, for to sit in Counsell. This Duke then prepared and ordained him to go to the said Counsell, and gave great regard unto the will and wisedome of the Child, and therefore take the

Child

Child with him. And when they were all gathered and assembled before the King and his counsell; My well-beloved Lords and Friends, said the King, will you know the cause wherefore I have assembled you together? They answered, and said, We all are (Soveraign Lord) at your commandment. Then said the King, It is a secret matter that I shall shew you: If that any man can open it, & declare what it signifieth, I swear and promise unto him by my Crown, that I will give unto him mine onely Daughter in Marriage, and he shall be my Fellow in my Realm, so long as Life doth last; and after my death, he shall have & possess all my whole kingdome: and the mystery of the Counsell is this. Three Ravens follow me still whersoever that I go, they leave me not, but cry out with such horrible voices, that the paine is grievous and wearisome for me to hear them, and much more to behold their lookes: therefore if there be any man, which knoweth the cause of this their earnest following of me, and can tell or shew what they mean by their crying, and avoid them away from me, without doubt I shall fulfill this promise that I have made. And as the King had thus said, there was none found in all the Counsell that understood the cause, or could remove or put away the Ravens. Then answered the Child, and said unto the Duke, My Lord, Think you that the

King will performe what he hath promised: and will you that I give the King knowledge of you, what you can doe? Then the Child said, I will my Life set in pledge, and I shall performe and make it good what I have said. When the Duke heard that, he went to the King, and said, My Lord and King, here is a young Man right cunning and wise, and he doth promise for to fulfill and satisfie in all things what you shall aske and desire touching these Ravens, if you will fulfill what you have promised. The King swore by the Crowne of his Kingdom, That which I have promised, all things shall be fulfilled. Then he brought the Child before the King, and when the King had beheld him, he spake unto him after this manner: O fair Child, can you give answer to this my Question? The Child answered, and said, Yea my Lord, and that in the best manner. Your Question is, Wherefore that the Ravens follow you, and horribly call upon you? To which I answer: Upon a time it happened, that there were two Ravens, a Male and a Female, that had brought forth between them a third Raven, and in that place there was such a great Famine and Scarcity of all manner of Food for the preservation of their lives, in such sort that Men, Beasts, and Fowles died, and perished for want. Now the third Raven was at that time very young, and not able to flie a-

broad

hoad to get her living: the Female ſhe left it, ſeking whereby ſhe might beſt get her own living; and to ſhew that ſhe did nothing regard hr young one, ſhe came no moze to the Neſt: The Male Raven, ſeing that, with great penury and labour fed the young Raven till he was able to flie. And now when this great Dearth was paſt and gone, then the Female Raven returned howne again to the young Raven, and would hold fellowſhip and company with him: But the Male Raven ſeing that, he would have driven her away, saying thus, That ſhe in his great miſery and neceſſity left him and his company, and therefoze now ſhe would have no company noz fellowſhip with him. She alleadged and ſaid, that ſhe had in his hatching great labour and ſozrow, and ſuffered much penury, and foz that cauſe ſhe would rather enjoy his company then the Male Raven. For this cauſe my Soveraign Lozd they follow you, asking true judgement which of them both ſhall have company with the young Raven? and this is the cauſe of this hozrible clamour and noiſe that they make daily unto you.

But my honoured Lozd, had you thereupon a right wiſe ſentence given, you ſhall never moze ſee them, oz be troubled with their crying. Then anſwered the King, and ſaid, Becauſe that the Female hath left and forſaken the young Raven in his moſt neceſſity, it Kan-

deth with reason and justice, that she would not follow him, but be without his fellowship: and where she saith, that in the hatching and bringing forth of him she had great pain and travell, that helpeth not, for her pain was turned into joy, as soon as she saw the young Raven in the world. But in regard that the Male is the cause of production & generation of every Beast of the Earth, and every Fowle of the Aire, & also because the young Raven in his necessity was sustained & fed unto the recovery & nourishing of his body by the Male: therefore I conclude both for judgement and sentence difinitive, that the young Raven shall abide, and keep company with the Male, and not with the Female.

And when the Ravens heard that sentence, with

with great noise and cry, they flew up into the Aire, and were no more seen nor found in all that Region.

When this was done, the King demanded of the young Man, what his name was: He answered, and said, I am called Alexander. Then said the King, I will that you shall grant me one request, which is, that from henceforth you shall name and take me, and none other, for your Father: for you shall have my Daughter to Wife, and you shall have the whole Government and possession of this my Realme. This young Alexander abode, and dwelled still there with the King, and every man did exceedingly love and favor him, for he began to haunt Justs and Tourneys, wherein at all times he did winne the Prize before all others that were in Egypt, so that his peere or like was not to be be found; neither was there so hard or obscure a question put to him, but that he could make knowne the true Sence, and meaning thereof. At that time there was an Emperour whose name was Tytus, that excelled in gentlenesse, courtesie, and curiosity, all other Emperors, Kings and Princes, in the whole World, insomuch that such fame and noise flew and ranne over the World of it, that whatsoever he was that would learne and profit in cunning, manners, or behaviour, he should go to that Emperours Court. And when Alexander heard

therfore he said to the King, My most honorable Lord and Father, you know well that the world is full of the fame of the Emperor, that it is very delectable and pleasant to abide and dwell in his court: wherefore, if it please you my renowned Lord and Father, I would very gladly go to his court, to the intent that I may obtain more wisedome, and grow prompter in manners and behaviour then now I am. Whereupon answered the King, It pleaseth me right well; but I would that you take with you plenty of Gold & Silver, and other necessaries, so much that you mine honour there may save, and that you may have also that which is to you most requisite & necessary. And also it seemeth unto me very expedient, that before your departing, you should marry my Daughter.

Then answered Alexander, Will it please you my Lord to spare me at this time, and at my comming home again I shall wed her with all honour, as unto her appertaineth. The King answered, Since that is your will to go unto the Emperors Court, I license you, and thereunto I give my consent. Then Alexander did take his leave of the King, and took with him abundance of Treasure, & then he went to the Emperours Court: and when he was come, with many Followers he went before the Emperour, and fell upon his knees, and saluted him, and did him reverence.

The

The Emperor rose up from his Seat Impe-
all, and kissed him, and asked him of whence,
d what he was, and wherefore he was come?
answered, and said, I am Son and Heir of
e King of Egypt, and am come to do service
your most high Majesty, if it please you to
cept of me. The Emperour said that he was
ght heartily welcome, and committed him to
s Steward, and made him his Carver. The
eward ordained him a fair Chamber, & pro-
ded for him all things that were necessary to
e same; & Alexander behaved himself so well,
at in a short time he was beloved of all people.

Not long after that, came the Kings Son
f France to do Service unto the Emperour,
d to learn good qualities, and fair and cour-
behaviour; him the Emperour received ho-
urably, and demanded his name, and of
hat Kindred he was come? He answered, I
n Sonne to the King of France, and I have to
ame Lodowick, your servant: Then said the
mperor, I have made Alexander my Carver,
d you shall be my Cup-bearer, that alwaies
shall do Service at my Table; & comman-
d the Steward to assigne him a lodging, whom
e placed with Alexander in his Chamber.
These two Gentlemē were so like in Stature,
d Visage, and Condition, that hardly the one
ight be discerned or knowne from the other,
t that Alexander was more cunning in all

his

his deeds than was Lodowick, for he was a Feminine man, and shame-fac'd: and these two young men loved well together.

The Emperour had one onely Daughter named Florentine, she was right fair and gracious, and should be his Heire; whom he loved intirely: she had a Court by her self, and Servants to her assigned: to her the Emperour every day was accustomed to send from his Table of his Dainties in token of love, by Alexander: insomuch that the Daughter begaune to have him marvailously in her favour, because of his wisedome and comely behaviour. It happenned upon a day Alexander at meat-time had such business, that he served not at the Table, nor none other gave attendance for him in his roome. Lodowick perceiving that, served in his roome: and as soon as he had served the Emperour, in his last service upon his Knee, the Emperour commanded him to bear a Dish to his Daughter, as he was wont to do: thinking that he was Alexander. Then took Lodowick the Dish, and went to the Palace of the Emperours Daughter, and saluted her with great reverence, and set the meat before her: untill that time he had not seen her. She perceived anon that it was not Alexander, and said to him on this manner, What is your name, and whose Son are you? He answered to her, and said, Madam, I am the Kings Son

of

France. and my name is Lodowick: she said, thank you for your labour; & then took his leav nd departed: in the mean time came Alexan- to the Table, & they fulfilled their service.

The Dinner being done, anon Lodowick ent to Bed sore sicke, and Alexander per- iving that, went to his chamber, and said unto im, O my most best beloved Friend and Fel- w Lodowick how is it with you, and what the cause of your infirmity? He answered im, and said, The cause I know not, but I feel e sore sick, that I fear me I cannot escape e death. Alexander said, The cause of your in- mity and disease I know well, for to day as did bear the meat to the Emperours Daugh- r, ye beheld her countenance and beauty so rvently, that your heart was taken and ravi- d with her love. Whereunto he answered, Alexander, all the Physitians in the World uld not more truly judge my Sickness; but I ar it will be my Death. Then said Alexan- er. Be of good comfort, and I shall help you nto my power: and so forthwith went to the erchant, and bought with his own money fair Cloth, set with precious Stones, un- nown to Lodowick. and presented it in his behalfe unto the Princess. As soon as she be- eld that, she asked him where he had that cost, and precious Cloth? And he said, Madam, f the Sonne of the most Christian King of

France,

France, who serveth it unto you for your love: for he having but once beheld your princely face, is grown so sick, that he lieth upon his bed even unto his death; & therefore if you suffer him to perish, you shall never recover again your honour.

Then said she, God Alexander, would you thus counsail me that I should lose my Virginity? God defend that, and be you sure Alexander, that for such messages, you shall never more win thanks of me, therefore go you out of my sight, and speak no more thereof to me. When Alexander heard that, he did obeysance, and departed.

The next day Alexander went againe to the City, & bought a Chaplet that was twice more in value then the Cloth, and therewith he went to the Princes Chamber, and gave it to her on the behalf of Lodowick. And when she saw that costly gift, she said unto him in this maner, I marvell of you, that so often as you have seen and spoken with me, that you have not so done your own errand in speaking for your self, but for another. Then answered he, O Madam, I have not been so disposed, because my Birth is not to be compared with yours; and also it happened me never such a case as my heart was so wounded: and he that hath a good Fellow is bound for to do him good and true Fellowship. And therefore now, excellent Princes, of your most abundant pitty have compassion on

him, and make him whole, that you have so ire wounded to Death, that it be not for her laid unto your cruelty & hardness of heart. She answered him, Go your way, for at this me I will give you no answer thereof: and as e heard that, he took leave and departed.

And the third day he went to the City, and ought a Girdle, that was more Value, and uller then the Chaplet was, and presented to her on the behalf of Lodowick: and when e saw & beheld that Gift so precious, she said unto Alexander, Say to Lodowick that he come o my Chamber about the third Hour in the ight, and he shall find the door open: and Alexander hearing that, was glad, & went to his fellow, and said, My best beloved fellow, be of good omfort, for I have conquered the Princess to u, and this Night I shall bring thee to her hamber. And when that was said, he started up s though he was wakened out of his sleep, and as well revived, and for great joy he became ell: the next Night following, Alexander took Lodowick and brought him unto the Chamber f the Lady, with whom he was in Solace and oy all Night, and from that time forth all her eart was upon him, so that there was but one ely love between them both.

And after that, Lodowick used oftentimes to isit her, so that by process of time it came to he ears of the Knights and Gentlemen of the

Court,

Court, how that the Emperors Daughter was known by Lodowick, and they conspired among themselves how they might find him, & intrap him therewith, and so for to take him. As Alexander had knowledge thereof, he armed him to withstand them, and when the Knights understood that, they fearing Alexander, suffered his fellow for to go in peace: Alexander many times put himself in jeopardy for him, he not knowing thereof; but the Princess knew it well.

In short time after that, there came Letters to Alexander, of the death of the King of Egypt, that he should hastily come and receive his kingdome with honour and joy: and that shewed he even to the Princess and to Lodowick, and also of his departing: wherefore they were sorrowfull and heavy. He said also unto the Emperor, My my honourable Lord, pleaseth it you for to understand, that I have received lettars of the death of my Father, wherefore it behoveth me to go and receive the kingdom, and that you will be pleased to give me leav to depart, and for all the benefits to me done, I offer my self and all my goods: and rather then I should by my going, any way offend or displease you my Lord, I shall forsake all my Realme, and all that I have in the world, and abide with you still. Then said the Emperour, Know you for certain, that for your departure I am right heavy and sorrowfull, for you were

the

he beſt Servant that was in all my Court: but
becometh not an Emperor to hinder his Ser-
nts from their promotions or advancements,
t rather promote them to higher or greater
nour. Therefore go you unto our Treaſurer,
he ſhall deliver you as much gold as you will
ve, and in the name of God (and my bleſſing)
into your Countrey. And thus Alexander
leave of the Emperour, and bad him fare-
ell: & they were all ſorrowfull for his depar-
re, for he was beloved of all.

Lodowick with the Princeſs brought him
his way Seven Miles at the leaſt: after
at, Alexander would not ſuffer them to goe
y further. Then fell they both to the ground
ith great ſorrow and heavineſs. And Alex-
der took and lifted him up again from the
ound, and comforted him with fair words,
d ſaid, O Lodowick, my moſt beſt beloved
llow, I warn you that the ſecrets being
twixt you and my Lady, you hide and keep
m as privily as you may, and take good heed
all things, for I wot another ſhall come
d be in my ſtead, that ſhall envy you of the
our and grace that you ſtand in with the
mperour, and day and night ſhall lie in wait
take you with a fault, and to put you unto
ame and ſhame. Then anſwered Lodowick,
d ſaid, O Alexander, I ſhall beware as much
to me is poſſible. But yllow ſhall I now do

when

when I shall want your company? Therefore one thing I shall desire of you, that you take this Ring of me for a remembrance. Then said he, I shall for the of love you gladly receive your Ring, and yet I shall never without the Ring forget you: and so he committed them both unto God. Then they embraced each other about the Neck, and kissed, and so they departed.

Not long after, the Kings Son of Spayn, named Guido, was received of the Emperor in the room and place of Alexander, to whom the Steward assigned Alexanders place & chamber; the which was very sore against the will of Lodowick. but he could not help it.

Guido seeing that Lodowick against his will had him in his fellowship, and he grew envious against him: so Lodowick of a long time for fear of the said Guido, kept him out of the company of the Lady. Nevertheless afterwards, being overcome with her love, sometime he haunted and went again unto her as he before had done. Guido quickly perceiving the same, waited subtilly long thereon, that he knew the truth, and was therefore certain that the Princess was by Lodowick known, and had accompanied with her.

Upon a time it happened that the Emperor stood in the Hall, and praised Alexander for his gentleness and wisedoms. Guido hearing that, said, My Lord, he is not so much worthy to be commended as you imagine, for he hath a long time born a Traytor in your House. The

Then the Emperor said, Tell me how? Guido said, You have but one only daughter, the which shall be your heir, and her Lodowick hath defiled, and lien by, through the help of Alexander, he goeth to her every night, as it pleaseth him. And as soon as the Emperour heard thereof, he was sore moved, and began to be angry: and it happened Lodowick upon the same time to come through the Hall, and as the Emperour saw him, he said, What hear I of thee, thou evill and untrue body? If it be found and proved true, thou shalt dye the most shamefull Death that can be devised. Lodowick said, My Lord the Emperour, what is the cause? Guido answered, I say, and depose here before my Lord against thee, that thou hast defiled his onely Daughter, and every night thou goest to her & doest Fornication with her, that with Battell I shall prove and make it good upon thy Body with my Body. Then said Lodowick, I am innocent, and not infected with that crime, and falsely thou dost bely me, and thereupon I hold thee Battell, and trust to God thy falshood shall come upon thine own head. Then the Emperour assigned unto them the day of Combate. That done, Lodowick went unto the Lady, and shewed to her the cause, and the day of Battell, by the Emperour assigned, & in what manner Guido had accused him, and said unto her, Now it behodeth me to hade your counsell,

or else I must die, for as you know it had not availed me to have gainsaid the Battell, without I should have yelded my self guilty: Guido is strong and hardy, that his like is none but Alexander, and I am feeble, and therefore if I fight the battell against him, I were but a dead man; and so you shall abide rebuke and shame. Then said she, Follow my counsell in that you mistrust your self, go hastily unto my Father, and say unto him that ye have received Letters, whereby you are assured that the King your Father is sore sicke, and lieth upon his death-bed, and desireth to see you, and to speake with you in person, and to dispose of his Kingdome before he depart out of his life: so desire him to give you leave for the love of your Father, to go visit him, and that he will prolong and lengthen the Day of Battell, that in the meane season you may go and come. And when you have gotten leave, as hastily as you can, secretly go to King Alexander, and being thither come, take him apart and shew him the cause of you coming, and require him in this your great extremity, that he will help and save us.

And when Lodowicke had heard that counsel, it pleased him well, and he did accordingly: And having obtained leave, and a long day, and respite of the Battell prefixed and assigned, he then departed and took his journey towards the

Realm

Realm of Egypt, and never ſtaied day nor night, till he came into King Alexanders Caſtle.

And when that King Alexander had underſtanding of his comming, he was very glad and went to meet him, and received him honourably, and he did wonder much at his comming. Then ſaid Lodowicke. O my dear Lord, and my beſt beloved friend, my life and my death is in your hands, for as you ſaid to me before, that I ſhould have another Fellow, the which ſhould lie in wait to eſpy me, and to deſtroy me, without I did looke more wiſely unto my ſelf: So, as long as I could I did abſtaine from her till I might no longer abide: but afterwards the Kings Sonne of Spaine made watch ſo long over me, untill he perceived the truth: in the end he accuſed me unto the Emperor, ſo that in the eighth day hereafter from this day, I muſt be ready and prepare me for to fight with him, body againſt body: and as ye know well, he is a very ſtrong and hardy man, and I am weak and feeble, and therefore hath Florentine counſelled me, that I ſhould not hide this matter from you, for he knoweth you to be a faithfull Friend, and that you would not leave us in this neceſſity.

Then ſaid Alexander, Is there any body that knoweth of your comming unto me for this matter, more then Florentine? he anſwered him and ſaid, No creature living, for I took leave of

the Emperor to go visit my Father, lying greivously sick. Then Alexander asked of him, What counsell hath Florentine given you now, and in what wise might I help you? He said, O my most constant and faithfull Friend, in this wise she hath counselled me, considering that we be like each other, that you should come and perform the battell with him, and no man should know you but she; and the Battell done, I should come again to the Court, and you return back to your own Countrey. Then he asked him, when the day should be of the Battell: and he said, Eight dayes hence.

Then said Alexander, If I should this one day tarry before I depart hence, then I cannot come by the day prefixed. Whereupon understand what I will do: I have bidden all my Subjects, that to morrow they should come to my wedding: and if I should go, then is the day lost; If I go not and do the Battle, then Florentine and you are undone: what thinke you is best to be done? When Lodowick did hear that, he fell to the earth, and began to sorrow out of measure, saying, Sorrow and heavinesse come suddenly to me on all sides. Then said Alexander unto him, Be of good comfort, for I shall not forsake you in this sort, though I should lose my life, and Kingdome: but hearken what I have thought upon: insomuch that we are both like one another, so that the one

of

of us cannot be known from the other; and as for me, I am not rightly known here, but that my Barons & all other my Subjects will take you for me, therefore you shall here abide and tarry, and marry my wife in my stead: & hold the Feast and Nuptials, and do all things as if I my self were there present, except when as you come to Bed with my wife, look that you be there true and faithfull, and I shall without any tarrying, go & take my Horse and ride thither whereas the battell shall be; & if God give me the victory, that I may overcome & vanquish your Enemy, I will come again secretly, and you shall go again unto your best beloved. This done, Alexander bad Lodowick, Farewell, and then he took his Journey towards the Emperours Court, for to fight and do the Battell with Guido, and Lodowick tarried in Egypt in stead of King Alexander.

And upon the next morning came Lodowick as though he had been King Alexander, and there solemnly in the Face of the Church, he espoused King Alexander's Wife, and solemnized the Marriage-Feast with great royalty of delicates and dainty meates, plenty of all manner of Wines, and divers melodies of Instruments of Musick, and great joy and cheer, for the Noble-men and all other people that were there assembled. And when the night was come, he went to bed with the Queen, & laid be-

twæn him and her a naked Sword, whereof she had great wonder, but nothing she said, and so he lay with her every Night so long as Alexander was out.

Now King Alexander at the day that was prefixed and set, came unto the Emperour, and said, O most Soveraigne Lord, it is so, that I have left my Father very sicke, and in great hazard of death, yet nevertheless I am come to performe my promise, and with a full resolution to defend mine honour. The Emperour said, You do honourably, and according to the valour of a noble man, and fortune shall favour you (I hope) in your just & righteous quarrell.

And when the Emperours Daughter understood that Alexander was come, anon she sent for

for him, and when he was come to her, ſhe very courteouſly and kindly embraced him, and with great joy and gladneſs, ſhe kiſſed him, and bleſſed the time that ſhe might ſee him again, & demanded of him where he had left her faithfull friend and lover, Lodowick? Then he declared unto her the whole diſcourſe and circumſtance, how he had left him King in his Realm: and ſo he took his leave of her, and went to Lodowicks Chamber, and there was no Creature that thought otherwiſe but that he was Lodowicke, except Florentine onely; The next Day following, before Alexander went unto the Battell, he ſaid unto the Emperor, in the preſence of Guido, My moſt renowned ſoveraigne Lord, Guido hath falſly and unjuſtly accuſed me unto your moſt noble Grace, in ſaying that I ſhould be of ſuch acquaintance with the Princeſs, your moſt vertuous and onely Daughter, which is to the great diſhonour of your moſt noble Perſon, and hers: whereunto I ſwear and affirm by the holy Evangeliſts, that ſhe was never in ſuch manner of wiſe known by me as he hath alleadged and informed unto you, which I ſhall prove and make good this day upon his Body, with the aid and help of God.

Then anſwered Guido, Yet once I ſay again, and ſwear by the holy Evangeliſts, and by all that God hath made, that thou haſt had knowledge, and haſt defiled the Emperours Daugh-

ter, and that I shall make good upon thy head.

Whereupon they leapt upon their Coursers, and ran so fiercely one at another with their Speares, that they both brake and shivered in peices: and then they drew their Swords, and fought so long together, untill at the last Alexander with great might and strength, at one stroke, smote off Guidoes head, and sent it unto the Emperors Daughter, whereof she was right glad, and bare it unto her Father, and said, Father, behold the head of him that hath so falsly defamed you and me.

When the Emperour perceived the victory, anon he sent for Alexander whom he thought to have been Lodowicke and said unto him, O Lodowicke this day your honour & my Daughters you have saved, you shall stand and be to morrow in my grace & favour, and whatsoever that he be that hereafter shall again defame you, he shall for ever stand in my indignation.

Then answered Alexander and said, God alwaies helpeth and saveth them that put their trust in him, and revengeth the wrong done unto the innocent.

But now most renowned Lord, one thing I do intreat at your hands: at my departure from my father, I left him sore sick, that it will please you to give me leave to go and see how it standeth with him, and if that he be any thing amended, I shall incontinent come again. Then

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he Emperour ſaid, That pleaſeth me: but you may in no manner of wiſe leave me, for from henceforth I cannot be without your preſence.

Now Alexander having taken leave of the Emperour, bad him farewell, and with all the ſpeed that he could make, rid back again unto his Realm. Now Lodowick having heard of his return, with much joy he ride rid to meet him; & having met together, with great gladneſs and cheer he friendly recieved him, and ſaid, O moſt true friend of all friends, tell me how fortune hath favoured you in this your journey & buſineſs, and to what end you have brought it? Then ſaid he, Go to the Emperor, & ſerve him as you have done before, for I have gotten you more grace and favour at his hands than ever you had in former time, and I have alſo cut off the head of your greateſt enemy and adverſary.

Then ſaid Lodowick, You have not onely at this time ſaved my life, but in like manner you have preſerved me heretofore, the which kindneſs I ſhall never forget, neither as yet I cannot requite it: but God reward you, and ſo he departed, and went again to the Emperours Court, & there was no man that had any knowledge of the abſenſe of King Alexander, except Lodowick onely.

And when that night was come, he went to Bed to the Queen, and as ſoon as he was laid in Bed, he began ſweetly to embrace her, and

with

with friendly words, he kissed her. Then said she, You have made this time too long, in that you have shewed nothing of friendship or love, how may this be? Then said he, Wherefore say you that? She said, Every night as I was in my bed, you have put betwixt you and me a naked Sword, and you have never turned you towards me untill now. And when he heard that, he thought on the truth of his fellow, and said, O my dear Lady, it was not done for any ill will, but for a good probation of love. But she said to her self, That love you shall have no more, but despight, and I will be revenged upon thee.

Then there was a Knight that she before had a little love and favour unto, and she began for

to love him more and more, so long till at the last they sought and imagined how they might destroy and slay the King, and therefore they got poyson and poysoned the King, so that if he had not been right strong of complexion, he had died thereof, for it wrought in him so fore, that it caused him to be a most fowle and horrible Leaper, as ever was seen upon the earth. The Lords and Noblemen of his said Realm, and the Queen also seeing this, despised him, and said, That it behoveth not a Leaper to raign over us, for he should not procure or ingender any fair or clean Heirs, and so he was despoiled of his dignity Royall, and driven out of his Realm.

In the mean time died the Emperour of Rome and Lodowicke married his Daughter: and after that, Lodowickes Father died, so that Lodowicke raignes both Emperour of Rome, and King of France at once.

When King Alexander heard that, he thought in himself, Now my fellow raigneth and ruleth both the Empire of Rome, and Realm of France: to whom may I go better then unto him, for whom I have many times ventured my life? And upon a night he rose up & made him ready, & took with him his staffe & clapper, and went towards the Emperors Country.

And when he was come nigh unto the Gate, he sate down among other poor Lazers, expecting

peeting the giving of Almes: and upon a sudden as the Emperour went out of the Pallace, all the poor Lazers began to ring their Clappers, and the good King Alexander did as the other did, but there was no Almes given to him: he tarried so long until the time that the Emperour was set and served at the Table.

Then went King Alexander unto the Gate, and knocked thereat, & the Porter asked, Who was there? Alexander answered him, I am a poor despised man, and I pray you for the love of God turn not away your sight from my visage, but that you will for the reward of God, do my message unto the Emperour: he asked, What is the matter? Alexander said, Go and tell him here is a Lazer that is right horrible ugly to see, the which prayeth him for the love of god, and King Alexander, that he will grant him this day to eat his Almes before him upon the earth in his Hall. The Porter answered, I wonder that you dare desire that of my Lord: for why, all the Hall is full of Lords and Noble-men, and if they should behold you, they would all abhor and forsake their meat; But forasmuch as you have required of me so lamentably for the love of God, I shall go and do your errand, whatsoever happeneth thereof: and so he went forward and did his message unto the Emperour. When the Emperour heard the Porter name Alexander the King of

Egypt

Egypt, he said to the Porter, Go thy waies and bring him before me, how horrible and ugly soever that his visage be, and ordain him a place before me, that he may eat and feed in my presence. The Porter brought him in immediately, and ordained him a place, and set him to meat before the Emperour: and when he had well refreshed himself, he said unto one of the Emperours Servants, My dear friend, do me this errand unto the Emperour, say unto him, that I pray him for the love of God and King Alexander, that he will send me his Cup of Wine: The Servant said, For the love of God, I will do it, but I believe it will not be, for if you should but touch my Lords Cup, he will not by any meanes drinke of the same Cup again: nevertheless he did the errand.

And when that the Emperour heard him to name King Alexander, he commanded that his Cup should be filled of the best wine, & carry it to him, the which wine when he had received, he put into his Bottle: and took his Ring that Lodowick had given unto him, and put it into the Cup, & sent it again into the Emperour.

And when the Emperour saw the Ring, he instantly knew that it was the same Ring that he had given unto King Alexander in friendship when he departed from him, and thought in his heart that King Alexander had been

dead

dead, or else that this man is very strangely come to the King: and commanded presently that the Lazer should not depart thence, untill the time that he had spoken with him; for in no wise could he have any knowledge of him, nor yet repute him for Alexander.

After that Dinner was done and ended, the Emperour take the sicke man apart, and asked him how he came by that Ring? King Alexander demanded if that he knew well the Ring? The Emperour said, I know it right well. Alexander said, Wot you also to whom you gave it? The Emperour said, I wot right well. How is it then, said Alexander, that you know not me, for I am Alexander, unto whom you gave the same Ring? When the Emperour heard that, he fell to the ground for sorrow, and tore his Robes and Clothes, and with many great sighings and bewailings said, O Alexander, you are the one halfe of my saule, where is your goodly & delicate body, now so unclean and pitifully infected, that was so fair and pleasant to behold? he answered, This is happened unto me, for the great fidelity that you have done unto me in the bed with my Wife, when you laid a naked sword betwixt you & her: wherefore she became wrath, and hated me, that she and a knight that in former time she had loved, have poysoned me, as you may see, and now they have driven me out of my Realm.

And

And when the Emperour heard that, he for
ove took him about the neck and kissed him, &
aid, O my most dear and intirely beloved Bro-
her, I sorrow to see you in this great perplexity
misery, I would to God I might die for you.
But my most dear friend, suffer patiently a lit-
le time, till that we have sent for all the Physi-
ians & wise masters in Physick to have their
ounsell and advice, if there be any remedy to be
had, or hope of recovering of your health: and if
t be possible to help you, we shall neither spare
Lordship, Empire, nor any other goods tempo-
rall, to make you whole and sound.

In the mean time he was brought into a
ir chamber richly hanged, & appointed of all
anner of things that were both requisite and
ecessary for his ease & health. Then in all hast
e sent his Messengers through all parts of the
World, for the most expert and best Physitians
hat might be found: of which within a moneth
fter were come and assembled before the Em-
perour, thirty, which were right expert and
ery skilfull in that Science: to whom the
Emperour said, My welbeloved Masters, I
ave a Friend that is very greivously in-
ected with a foul Leprosie, whom I would
ery gladly were healed and made as sound
nd whole as ever he was, sparing neither for
old or silver, or any other goods whatsoever,

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that I have in this whole world, but that I would gladly give to recover his health again.

Then answered the Walters, All that ever is possible to be done in Physick, you shall soon understand, after that we have seen the person: and when they saw him, they knew the cause of his infirmity, and they said, It was incurable for all Physitians living.

And when the Emperour had heard that, he was right sorry in his heart, and committed it unto the helping hand of Almighty God, calling unto him most of the religious men that dwelt near unto the Court, and a number of poor people, besides many other devout persons, and desired of them earnestly to make their Prayers unto Almighty God, that he would vouchsafe of his infinite goodness and mercy, to make whole his dear friend, King Alexander, and the sooner for their good deeds and prayers. And he himself (with many others) fasted and prayed humbly to Almighty God, for the speedy recovery of health of his friend.

Now upon a time as King Alexander was at his Prayers, there came unto him a voyce from Heaven, saying, Tell Lodowick the Emperor that if he with his own hands will take those two little Children which his Empress had at one burthen, & slay them, & that with the blood of them he will wash and bath his body, then his flesh shall become as fair and as clear as

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the bodies of those little Children: if not, then must never look to be cured whilst breath is in thy body, and so farewell.

When King Alexander had heard this most strange voice, he then began to think within himself, what voice it was, and from whence it came: then he replied to himself, and said, This vision is not to be shewed, for it is much contrary to humane nature, that any man should slay his own Sons for the recovery of the health of a strange man.

The Emperor continued both night and day in Prayer, with great devotion, still earnestly praying to God for remedy for King Alexander, never ceasing: until such time, that a voice came into him, & said, How long will you thus call to cry upon me? when it was openly shewed unto King Alexander by what means he might recover his health, and his body to become clear without either spot or blemish.

Now the Emperour having heard that voice, he arose and went unto King Alexander, and said unto him, Of all Friends the best and most true, blessed be the most high and everlasting God, the which never faileth them that put their whole trust in him: of whom I have knowledge, that it is shewed unto you how and in what manner you may be recovered of your leprosie, wherefore I intreat and desire you, that you will plainly lay open un-

to me how this may be done for the restoring of your former health, that we may have joy together; and if you should need any thing that may do you any good, I shall fulfill it unto my power, yea, and for your health give all that I have to.

Alexander said, Sir, I dare not shew it to you how that I may be cured & healed of my leprosie, for it exceedeth, and it is a thing against nature for to be done, therefore I will not as yet shew it you, howbeit I have great trust and confidence in you.

The Emperor said, Alexander, put your trust in me still, for whatsoever is possible for to be done for recovering and restoring of your health I shall do it, and therefore conceal nothing from me I pray you.

Then said Alexander, I have of God knowledge, that if you will slay your two Sons with your own hands, and wash me in their Blood, I shall be whole; & therefore I have not shewed it unto you, for me thinketh it is against nature that the Father should slay his own Children for the health of a stranger. The Emperor said, Say not that you are a stranger, for I love you as my self, and therefore if I had ten Children I should not spare one for your health.

Afterwards the Emperour espied his time when the Empress was out of the way, and he went into the chamber where the children slept and drew out his knife, & cut both their throats,

and

and gathered the blood in a veſſell, and then he bathed and waſhed Alexander therewith: and when he was bathed, his body and fleſh was as fair and clean, as though it had been a young Child. Then the Empsrour had perfect knowledge of his viſage, & kiſſed him, ſaying, O good Alexander, now I ſee you in the ſame forme which I have oftentimes delighted in.

Bleſſed be the Almighty God, that ever I had theſe children by whom your health is reſtored, and your body made pure and clean. And as yet there was none that had knowledge of the death of theſe Children ſave only the Emperour and Alexander.

And when the Empsrour ſaw that good King Alexander was perfectly healed, he ſaid unto

him, I will ordaine unto you an honourable company, and you shall go from hence about ten miles, and the next day send me a messenger, & let me know the day of your coming backe againe, & I shall then with great solemnity come and meet you, and you shall remain with me untill such time as I may conveniently provide for the recovery of your Realm again.

This counsell pleased King Alexander right well, and according to the Emperours will, it was performed: for on the next day following there came a Messenger unto the Emperour, certifying him of the coming backe againe of King Alexander.

And when the Empress heard these tidings she rejoyced, and said unto the Emperour, O my most best beloved Lord and Emperor, have you not just cause to rejoyce and be glad, seeing that Alexander the King of Egypt, is now comming to see you, whom of a long time you have not seen? And if it please you to go & meet him, with your Lords and Gentlemen, I shall follow you with my Ladies and Gentlewomen: and as yet she knew not of the death of her two Children.

Then rode the Emperor and Empress with a great company of Lords and Ladies to meet with good King Alexander: and when they met together with great reverence and honour they received him, and with great joy and gladness they brought him into the Palace: And when

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the time of dinner was neer at hand, Alexander was placed at the table between the Emperor and the Empress; and all the mirth and cheer that she could make, she shewed unto him.

And when the Emperour perceived that, he was right joyfull and glad, and he was so exceeding well pleased, that he said, O mine own Florentine, it glads me above all things, that you make unto King Alexander so good cheer: Then answered the Empress, & said, Wherefore should I not? is not his company unto us more precious than Gold, or Silver? But unto you my renowned Lord much more, for by his means it was that you attained unto so great honour and dignity, and by him many times you have been saved from death. The Emperor answered, & said, Then I pray you my only beloved Florentine, that you will take heed to my words, that I shall say unto you: Saw you not that ugly and deformed Lazer, which yesterday sate before our table, and prayed me for the love of God and good King Alexander, that I would give him drink? She said, My honourable Lord, I saw him well, a more horrible man I did never behold. Then said the Emperor, I demand this one question of you, Put case that he were King Alexander, and that he could not by any meanes be made whole but with the blood of your two Sonnes, both which you in one day brought into this world, you would not that

their blood should be shed, that he might bath himself therein, to the intent that thereby he might have perfect health and comly favour, as you now see him have.

She answered, and said unto him, My renowned Lord and Husband, wherefore demand you of me that question? I say, I tell you of a truth, that if I had ten Sons, I should gladly slay them with my own hands, for to prepare and ordaine for him a Bath, and would wish him therein mine own self, rather then I should leave him in such a loathsome and miserable case, so horrible for to behold, and such danger of death withall: God might well send us more Children, but such a Friend were a thing were impossible for us ever hereafter to finde throughout the whole world.

When the Emperor heard this from her, he was well pleased in his minde, and said, O my loving Empress, had you rather have your children dead, then Alexander should languish in this Leprosie? then shall I open and shew you now the truth of the matter: that foul Leper which you saw, was Alexander that sitteth here by us, and by that means is made whole with the blood of our five Sons, and they are dead.

Assoon as the Empress did hear that, she began with extremity of sorrow mournfully to cry out, as Nature would she should do, although she had said before, that she had rather

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se her Children dead, then Alexander should remain in such pain and misery.

The Nourishers of the Children understanding this, they presently with great crying and weeping, ranne to the Nursery and Chamber of them, and great sorrow and bewailing was made through the Emperours Court for his two Sons: and when the Nourishers of them came to the Chamber, they found the Children playing, and singing a song of praise & thanksgiving to the Father, Son, and the holy Ghost, for restoring again of their lives, and then they returned again in all hast unto the Emperour and the Empress, and shewed unto them how that the Children were living, and that about their throats where they were cut, they had circles of thred of Gold, whereof was great joy and gladness in all the Court, with thansgiving to Almighty God, for that exceeding great miracle and wonderfull work.

After that, the Emperour with a great multitude and company of people, gathered and assembled together, went with King Alexander into Egypt, and set him again in his Royalty & possession of his Realm. And the Queen with the knight, who had lived long together in adultery, he caused them both to be burnt. And when this was done, the Emperor had one only Sister, whom he married unto King Alexander.

And when King Alexander had obtained all

his Realm again, and was set in good rest and peace, the Emperour returned again unto his Empire: and then King Alexander right wisely and politickly governed himself in his affairs, that he overcame his rebellious Enemies.

And when that he was seated in all his glory, peace, and might, he had thought and minde upon his Father and Mother, by whom he was cast into the Sea, who dwelled in farre parts. And from thence he sent unto them a Messenger, to let them have knowledge how that the King of Egypt upon such a day would be with them, to view those parts of the Countrey, and to sport himself, and to make a royall Feast with them. And when the Messenger was thither come, they received him joyfully, with bountiful entertainment, & large gifts to him given, & sent him back again, saying, That their services shall be ready at all times to do the kings pleasure, but that could they never by power discern, that he would vouchsafe to shew them that honor, whereof they were not worthy as for to come to visit them to those parts, and to sport himself there a while.

The Messenger returned back towards the Kings Court, and there shewed the King how willingly they would receive him, and in what manner they did reward him, and how true and faithfull they were, & ready to do him servics at his commandment, wherewith the king was

well

well pleased. And when the day was come that was set, the King with a fair company rode towards his Fathers house, the which was to the Knight his Father, and Mother, unknown that he was their Son.

When the King was come nær to his Fathers castle, the Knight rode joyfully to meet & receive him, & whē he came nigh to the king, he alighted from his horse, & did his reverence upon his knees, but the King took him up presently, and commanded him to take horse again, and so the rode together unto the Castle.

And when that they were come thither, the Mother came unto him, & fell upon her knees and welcomed him gladly, & the king took her up as lovingly, and kissed her right friendly: & she said unto him, My most honorable Lord, you do to us (unworthy) great honour with the presence of your most honourable Personage, the which we shall never be able to deserve.

After that the meat was all ready, and that time of the day was come to go to dinner, the Father came with a Bason and Ewer, and the Mother with a Towell, saying, Sir, all things are ready, pleaseth it you to wash: And when the King saw that, he smiled, & said to himself, Now is the song of the nightingale true, that my father and my Mother should gladly fulfill as I have said, if that I my self should thereunto consent and suffer them to do it. But he would not

suffer

suffer them to do him any such service, saying, Your age is to be honoured and worshipped, and therefore I will none of it: & then he called one of his Servants unto him, whom he commanded to do that service: then said the knight, You will not suffer us to do it for our honour, because we are not worthy thereof: the king said, Have I not said, that for your age I forbeare you? When the King was set at the Table, he set his Mother on the right hand of him, and his Father on the left side, & they as much as they might or durst, did behold his favour and countenance.

After dinner, the King presently entred into a fair Chamber, and made the Knight with his Lady to follow him in, & commanded all others to avoid their presence.

And when they were all alone, the King said, Have you no children? they answered, We have neither Son nor Daughter. And the King said, Had you never any? The knight answered, We have had one Son, but he is long ago dead. Then the King asked of what death he died: & the Knight said, A naturall death. Then the king said, If I may otherwise know or find, that are you found with a most horrible fault: then asked the knight, My most honorable & renowned Lord, wherefore enquire you so earnestly after our Son? the King answered, & said, That do I not without just cause, & therefore I must

and

nd will know of what death he died; if you will ot tell me, I ſhall cauſe you both to die a moſt hamefull and wicked death.

When they heard that, they fell upon the ground on their knees before him, & asked him pardon and forgiveneſs for their lives. But the king would not ſuffer them for to kneel, but took them up, & ſaid, To that intent came I not unto your houſe, to eat your bread, and to betray you: but ſay to me the very truth, and you ſhall be pardoned, for it is given me to underſtand, that you have put him to death, and if that you be found culpable therein, & come to judgement you muſt die a moſt ſhamefull death.

Then ſaid the Knight, My moſt honourable Lord, pardon me my life, and I ſhall ſhew you the very truth. The King ſaid, Fear not, for I ſhall do unto you no harme.

Then anſwered the Knight, & ſaid, My moſt dread ſoveraigne Lord, we had a Son that was wiſe, and learned, and right well underſtood, and upon a time as he ſtood before us, and ſerved us at the Table, there came unto the window a Nightingale that ſung recording ſweetly, whoſe ſong he began to interpret, & to tell us what it meant, and ſaid, This Bird ſingeth that I ſhall become ſo great and mighty a Lord, that it ſhall be to your honour & advancement, in ſuch wiſe, that you my Father ſhall be glad to hold a baſon with water to waſh my hands, & my Mother a

Towell

Lewell, if that I would suffer it.

And when I did hear that, I was sore moved and vexed in my minde, and so I took him upon my shoulder, and cast him into the Sea for to drowne him.

Then said the King, What evill might have come to you, if he had been made so great and mighty: me thinketh it should have bin for your honour, comfort, & profit. The Knight said, My renowned Lord it was no reasō, but a woodnes.

The king answered, That was a great foolishnes of you, that you would do against the ordinance and will of God. And now ye shall know for troth, I am your Son that you did cast into the Sea, and God of his great mercy and goodnes hath saved me, & by his grace hath brought and preserved me to this estate and dignity.

And the Father and Mother hearing that, with fear and joy replenished and amazed, did fall flat to the ground; whom he lovingly and friendly took up, saying, Fear not, but rather rejoyce and be glad, for you shall suffer no harm, but my exaltation shall be to your glory, joy, and profit: and so he kist both his Father & Mother with great joy and gladnes. Then began the Mother to weep and lament greatly, and the King said unto her, Leave off your sorrowing and weeping, and be of good cheer, for in my Realm you shall be honoured above me, during my life: and so he tooke them both

with

with him into his Kingdoms, where they dwelled a long time together in honour, & ioy, and ended their daies with comfort and loue of all the people.

Here followeth the application of the Example to the purpoſe.

Then ſaid Dioclesian the Emperours Son, Lord haue you vnderſtood what I haue ſaid? the Emperour ſaid, Right well: Then ſaid the Son, My moſt honourable and redoubted Father, although that God hath giuen and indued me with wiſdome, and vnderſtanding aboue others, that ſhall not be an impayring of your honour and might, but more for the preſeruation & maintenance of the ſame: ſo in like manner the Kings excellent Maieſty, which was nothing to the hinderance of the Father, but the rather for his worſhip, profit, & greater comfort. For as long as they liued, it was in very great ioy and mirth, and they were beloued of the people, and honoured of his Kingdome. Then ſaid the Emperour, My beloued Son, I will wholly reſigne all the Empire vnto you to gouerne & rule, for I perceiue well by your Narratiō that you haue to me declared, that it is beſt for me, and moſt for mine eaſe, that I now leaue this worldly & tedious buſineſs, and the labour and cares of a King, and betake me to my reſt and eaſe

ease, for I am old & feeble. Then answered the Sonne, and said unto his Father, My most honourable Lord and Father, so shall it not be; but as long as you live, you shall have the authority & government of the Empire, to do your command, as it appertaineth unto an Emperour; but in all the businesses that are laborious and troublesom, I will always be ready to minister any service that possibly I can, according to my bounden duty.

How Judgement was given upon the Empress, and how she and her Lover were put to death.

THen the Emperor commanded the Judges and justices to sit in judgement, & to bring again the Empress before them with the Ladies, & also the Ribauld her best beloved, clothed in the vesture & habit of a woman, whom he did cause to stand next unto the Empress: Then the Emperours Son asked sentence and just judgement upon them, saying,

My most honourable Lord and Father, even as you are Emperour of all the world, and that your Majesty and power requireth to do true justice unto all your Subjects that desire it: So now I demand, that you this day do give right sentence, & true judgement upon the untruth, falshood and shame, which were put and alleaged

ged unto me by the Empreſs, for the which accuſations I have born ſeven times led unto the Gallows, and have ſtood in great jeopardy and peril of my life, & alſo that ſhe hath born to you untrue of her body as you have ſeen by good proof made before you, on the which I aske judgement; and therefore command your judges and juſtices to give ſentence thereupon according to right, equity and Law.

Aſſoon as the Empreſs heard this, ſhe fell flat to the earth before the Emperor, and asked mercy & forgiveneſs for her juſt offence and miſdoing; but it helped nor profited her nothing, for the Son would have right, & deſired judgement.

Then ſpake the judges and juſtices, Her own miſdeeds condemne her, and the report of her Lemman by her kept and found, therefore we give ſentence againſt the Empreſs, that ſhe ſhal be bound to a Horſe taile, and drawn through all the ſtreets of the city to the place of Execution, and there to be burnt: We judge and give ſentence againſt the Kibauld, that he ſhall be quartered and ſmitten in pieces, and his fleſh caſt to the Hounds, & Birds of the ayr, for to devour him: and this ſentence was approbated and allowed of all the people.

Hereafter in ſhort time died the Emperor, and Diocletian his Son governed and ruled the Empire with great wiſedome, and allwaies held & kept his Maſters with him in great honour

and

and glory: By whose counsell and wisedome he governed the Empire, that he excelled all his Predecessors in riches, and doing right and iustice: and his Masters so loved him above all others in the world, that many times they put themselves in great perill and jeopardy of their lives for him, and so ended their daies in great joy and honour, to the praise of Almighty GOD.

FINIS.

Mr. Inglis has a small 4to fragment of the latter part of the 7 wisemasters printed by Pynson with the remains of two cuts. 1. Marriage of a king & queen the bishop holding the ring. 2. The Empt. in bed advising with the nobles the son near the bed. It is in English prose. It has Pynsons cypher SR